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THE

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ANTAR.

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ANTAR,

A BEDOUEEN ROMANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC,

BY

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ORIENTAL SECRETARY TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

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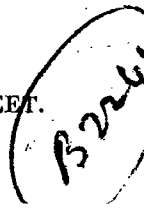

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LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

ANTAR.

CHAPTER XVII.

ANTAR remained in the tents till King Zoheir sent a messenger after him, saying, Your presence is required by King Zoheir, Aboolfawaris, that he may execute his agreement with you. As soon as he reached King Zoheir's dwellings, he smiled upon him, and seated him among his sons. Welcome, he cried; I greet thee, Champion of the Absians, on the day of battle; protector of their wives and children—And he felicitated him on the safety of Ibla.

My expedition, said Antar, was only on her account, in order that I might rescue her from one who plotted her death and annihilation; and thus he continued in verse:

" O King of noble mind; O most renowned for " every virtue and high qualification—give up your " ears to attend to my discourse. However difficult

" of attainment, no one should dread any enterprise;
" and when resolved on revenge, he should defy all
" fears. If fortune deserts me, my hand is my hope,
" and it will succeed; and glory shall raise me above
" mankind. I only fear you, whom no one shall
" afflict with pain; and I respect only women. I
" have that dependance on you, that with it I brave
" all evils; and in you I only acknowledge one that
" preserves his protection. So seize what is my due,
" and aid me against a man who is a foul wretch,
" degraded and unrespected."

When Antar had terminated his verses, he related to King Zoheir all that had happened to him, and he was exceedingly surprised at such events. Ibla then, said he, is among the living. Yes, my lord, replied Antar; she is at her father's: but, O King, all is past that befel her; I would indeed have striven to release her, had even mountains opposed me in the form of men.

O Antar, said King Zoheir, you and Rebia will not cease quarrelling till you have opened upon us a door that will never close. You would have done right to have informed me of this important point, and I would have despatched a messenger to King Numan, and have explained the business: Numan would have released Ibla from the tribe of Shiban; you too would not have gone away and taken the property of Mooferridj, who is absent in the service of the King of Persia; and we should then have had no farther negotiation with him.

My lord, said Antar, had I acquainted you with it, Rebia would have heard of it; he would have mounted, or sent word to have her killed; but now the charge against him is established by her appearance; but as to the tribe of Shiban, I will soon show you what I will do with them, that they may restore Ibla's tiara and property. May God destroy Rebia! cried King Zoheir, and send him on the path of death for his insidious practices, in carrying off by force the daughter of his uncle, and delivering her up to a tribe that was not of her species. For this, may God punish him in his property and his person!

King Zoheir related to Antar all that happened to Rebia at Rikaya Beni Malik during the night attack—and the misery he had endured. When the news of Ibla became public, all the women and noble ladies assembled round her, congratulating her on her safety, and the same evening the intelligence reached the tribe of Fazarah, and Rebia heard it. His soul melted within him, and his gall burst, as he said to his brothers, What say you to this? Did you not tell me, said they, that you did not leave Shiban till you had actually accomplished the death of Ibla? I am quite bewildered, said Rebia, at this circumstance; for certainly I did not even go to King Numan till Ibla was buried in the sand, and with my own eyes I saw her blood on the hands of a slave whom we ordered to kill her: but,

indeed, should the slave have betrayed us—And he sent for the man who brought the news, and asked him how Ibla had been rescued. My lord, he answered, I have not heard the particulars, but I saw Antar on his return, and with him were some companions and property that filled the whole land, and by his side was a swarthy slave, tall in stature, beautiful of countenance. I inquired about him, for his extraordinary beauty surprised me. They told me it was Basharah, and that he was the person who had rescued Ibla from Rebia, and had taken away all the wealth of his master, being desirous to fix himself among the tribe of Abs and Adnan, on account of a young girl who lived with Antar, named Rabiat, to whom he had been long attached.

This explained the whole business, and he said to himself, This is indeed what never entered into my calculation; but, continued Rebia, let King Zoheir do me justice, otherwise I will stir up dissensions between him and King Numan, whom I will urge to invade him with the Persians and the Arabs; and I will say to him, When I asked his daughter in marriage for him, he answered, I have no daughter that can do for King Numan. This was Rebia's situation: but Antar in a subsequent conversation said to King Zoheir, I request permission to send to Rebia, in order to demand restitution of Ibla's property. Should he confess it, and say the devil tempted me, and it was taken from me on the night

attack, I will pardon him; but should he deny it, I will punish him as he deserves. And he rose up and went home.

Now Cais, King Zoheir's son, was not easy about Rebia, so he would not venture to give any answer to Antar, for he dreaded the prospect of any disturbances among the Arabs; and all were interested in the elucidation of this dreadful business. Basharah was all this time devoting himself to Rabiat.

At dawn, Antar told his uncle Malik and his son Amroo to go to King Zoheir, and not to quit him till he should send to Rebia and demand Ibla's property. They accordingly departed, and said, O King, our daughter has been captured in her own country, and carried by force to Shiban: you yourself are witness to this. Ibla's property has been plundered, and you are the King of the time. We cannot either forget the stratagem of Amarah, who also took her prisoner, and exposed her among the tribe of Cahtan; and now Rebia has endeavoured to put her to death after having violated her reputation among the Arabs. But that is now past; what I demand is Rebia's punishment for his treachery; otherwise, my nephew Antar will use violent measures, and release our property from him by the sword.

This discourse alarmed King Zoheir, as to the troubles and dissensions that might arise in consequence, so he sent for his son Cais. Know, said he, that Rebia has brought disgrace upon this tribe, and

his crime is made clear by Ibla's re-appearance. I wish, my son, you would go to him, and order him to make restitution of the property, and not thwart these people any more, before I let them requite him for his misdeeds.

Prince Cais set off with five horsemen, and when he came nigh to the tribe of Fazarah, he sent on a man to apprise Rebia of his arrival. Rebia and Amarah, and Hadifah, came out to meet him and saluted him. For what purpose are you come? said Hadifah. O Cais, is it for the chase in our country, or on a visit, that we may enjoy your society? I have only come, said Cais, on account of this man, who has behaved ill to the tribe, and has abandoned his friends to be insulted by his enemies. He related to Rebia all that had happened, and demanded all Ibla's property.

'Well, said Rebia to Hadifah, did ever the like of what I have endured from my tribe befal any human being? Is there in the world a severer distress than mine? Have I indeed usurped to myself wealth not even all the kings of the Arabs could supply? Had not my brothers overtaken me, the wild beasts might have eaten my carcase; and after all, they accuse me of this infamous transaction, and King Zoheir believes, to my discredit, all that worthless insignificant slave can state to my prejudice. I never set eyes upon Ibla, neither on a journey, nor in society. I never took from her a single robe or jewel, and all the world knows I used to rail at my brother

Amarah on her account, and dissuaded him from pursuing her; and truly I have been as much affected by this cruel event—yes, just as much as her own father. Perhaps it was some Irak horsemen that chanced to meet her, and carried her as a prisoner away from home, and now have released her; for I have just heard she has returned to the tribe of Abs, and that God has restored all her charms to her family. She's an honest girl, and speaks the truth; but did she see me the night she was carried off to Shiban? and did she ever set eyes on me when in that country? Ascertain this point, and let Antar trust in what she says; and if Ibla absolves me in her answer, let them demand her property from the tribe of Shiban, where she was disgraced and dishonoured, but that tribe will never let Antar possess himself of their property, or their maiden Rabiat. But truly their horsemen and their armies will fall upon you; their dust will rise over you, and perhaps King Numan will assist them with the warriors of Lakhm and Juzam, all noble people; and will make your father repent when repentance will not avail him; but now he is warned, and let him look to his own affairs.

Prince Cais listened, and he hesitated what to believe. Cousin, said he, you have spoken the truth; I know Antar is a wretch, and that he has offended you in this business. Now that, O Cais, you are well acquainted with this circumstance, said Hadifah, why do you not put to death this cursed slave?

Prince Cais wheeled about, and returned with his associates to inform his father of Rebia's answer. They continued till they came near home, when he saw his father, and his brothers, and the heroes of the tribe all assembled at the lake of Zat ul irsad; he looked at them as some one thus repeated—

"Behold our spacious residence sweetly flowered, "it combines every pleasure of life. On the pro- "jections of our dwellings is the narcissus, lovely "in its sword-blades enveloped in green armour. "Mark how the edge of the scimitar and the point "of the spear surround the fair and the swarthy. "The men are like lions when they protect their "young, yea, even like rapacious lions. Their "women are like fawns, and their children like the "glittering planet Venus. The modest women "dance in security with the men, and in the enjoy- "ments of life there is no molestation. There is "only among them the lion of the tribe, their chief, "and he is Antar."

After Cais' departure for the tribe of Fazarah, Hatal, and a party from the tribe of Ghiftan, came to visit King Zoheir, and he gave them a feast at the lake. When Cais arrived they all stood up; he mentioned Rebia's answer, and how he depended on Ibla's testimony. Antar was seated there, and when he heard Cais' narrative, May God curse that Rebia! he exclaimed. Restrain yourself, said King Zoheir, O Aboolfawaris, and let Iblæ be questioned. I will go and interrogate her, said her father. So

he rose and went to his daughter. Questioning her, Ibla replied, May God curse falsehood and liars! I saw not Rebia the night they carried me off from the lake, and I saw him not in Shiban. Malik returned and told King Zoheir: Well, said he, there is nothing then to be said against Rebia. But Basharah happened to be present, and as soon as he heard Malik's and King Zoheir's remarks, O mighty king, he exclaimed, what is all this artifice? Was Ibla present among the men when Rebia and my master divided her property? But when I returned and told them Ibla was killed and under the sand, then Rebia danced and capered for joy, and presented me his own inner garment and turban. Basharah disappeared for a short time, and quickly returned, bringing with him the garment, turban, and poniard, with which Rebia had bribed him; he placed them before King Zoheir: This is what Rebia gave me, said he, for the murder of Ibla. When the chiefs of Abs saw this, they all exclaimed against the nefarious and infamous conduct of Rebia, and they wanted to have him seized.

When Cais heard the disgrace of Rebia, his indignation and rage increased. He immediately mounted his horse again, and said, By the faith of an Arab, never will I sit down till I have elucidated this affair that will burst my gall. He hastened back to the tribe of Fazarah, and when Rebia saw him, he was in great consternation and amazed at his speedy return; and to his inquiries,

Cais related the story of Basharah. When Rebia heard this he burst into a laugh, but it was the laugh of conscious shame: in his heart there blazed a fire of rage; he clapped his hands and appeared much pleased. Now, said he, by the faith of an Arab, my property that was taken from me at Rikaya Beni Malik will come to light, for that garment, turban, and poniard were taken during that night-attack; and now, indeed, I have no enemy but Antar.

Cais was confused and astonished at the words of Rebia. He remained that night, and did nothing but consult about the destruction of Antar till morning dawned, when Cais mounted and returned home.

Well, said Rebia to his brother, what did you think of the answer which I made to Cais? God prosper you, said his brother, how you lied and managed to confirm falsehoods, artifice, and villany, and fraud!

Cais went home, and met his father at the lake, and told him all Rebia had stated in reply, and that the garment and turban were taken from him during the night-attack, and that he has no other enemy but Antar. Indeed, my son, said King Zoheir, I am quite bewildered about the families of Carad and Zeead; however, put this business off till to-morrow, when these guests will go away, and the contest between Rebia and Basharah shall be decided. The next day the Ghiftanians having de-

parted home, King Zoheir sent after Antar and his uncles, ordering them to bring Basharah, that Rebia might be confronted.

My lord, said Antar, when they were all assembled, what is Rebia's answer? Aboolfawaris, said King Zoheir, Rebia says that you have the property that was taken from him at Rikaya Beni Malik, amongst which was this garment and turban; but bring Basharah here that we may understand what he has to say, and then the offender shall be punished according to his acts. Antar jumped up and went to the tents in search of Basharah, but he could not find him. He asked Rabiat about him, but she said, O my lord, since that time he was with you at the lake I have not seen him, and he never returned. Antar shuddered, and was amazed. He went back and told King Zoheir, who said, He would not have disappeared had he not been a liar, and doubtless you are concerned in this business, and this is not an affair becoming an Arab chief: and King Zoheir expressed his wrath. The warriors of the family of Carad retired, and their shame was great. Antar also returned, saying, I will not quit this country till I have rescued my property with the sword, and he thus repeated:

"Greatness has excited jealousy, and I am "avoided; did not passion influence me, love "should not master me to such a degree. I would "possess myself by force of what I obtained from "fortune, doubly armed and powerful as she is;

" but should my hand be broken its power would " not be obeyed, for I have a heart that spurns at " fortune. There is a time for compassion and " likewise for ignorance, but, O tribe, I am more " inclined towards mercy. I cling to my kindred " and honour them, and conquerors are the objects " of my respect, and I admire them. But here " they remark my forbearance, and my weakness " inflames them with hope; but I shall not be van- " quished. I shrink from the base-minded, for I " know avarice should be avoided, and generosity " sought after. It is ascertained that liberality is a " quality in man that is talked of by the good, and " subdues all dispositions. Ambition I have, and " its mansion is above Arcturus, and my residence " is exalted to the skies."

O my son, said Shedad, we are with thee, and whithersoever thou goest we will accompany thee. We will not remain in a spot where thou art despised and ill treated. But stop till we obtain some intelligence of Basharah, and let us observe the conclusion of our adventure with Rebia. Antar staid quietly three days, but on the fourth night, when Antar was sitting alone, a black slave introduced himself, and said, O Aboolfawaris, protect me and realize my wishes, and I will give you good tidings. What are your tidings? asked Antar. My lord, he cried, haste to your friend Basharah, and release him from the power of Rebia. And how, exclaimed Antar, came he into his power? Master,

cried the slave, thus it is: When Basharah gave evidence against Rebia, and made the affair public, he said to his brother, What think you of this slave Basharah, who has received our bribes in Shiban, and is now come to witness against us here? He then called to one of his slaves, called Marzook, and said, Well, Marzook, you are ever talking of your zeal, but till now I have never had occasion for your services. What do you want, my lord? asked the slave. What I want of you, said Rebia, is that you go to the tents of the tribe of Abs, and bring me Basharah, that I may expose him to the cruelest tortures. The slave took with him four others, and set out for the Absian tents, and secreted himself in a valley near the habitations, seeking the lake of Zat ul irsad. Here Marzook and his comrades remained concealed till Basharah rose up; he was intoxicated; and as he strayed to some distance from the tents, Marzook plunged upon him like a vulture, and rolling him up in a sack, carried him off to the valley, and thence they all repaired with him to the tribe of Fazarah. As soon as they came into the presence of Rebia, Now, he cried, are all my wishes fulfilled. He dug a deep pit, and threw him into it, covering it with branches and camel dorsers, and stationed over him a slave-girl, called Yamama, beautiful in face and form, and much in favour with Rebia. Early in the morning, when Rebia went out to the chase with his brother, the damsel came to Basharah, and as soon as she beheld

him, love for him struck into her heart, and entered deep into her senses and her soul. How is it that these wretches have thus ill-used you? she cried. With whom am I? fair maid, he asked. With the family of Zeead, she replied. Then can I never escape, he added. You may escape, said she; if you will sincerely engage yourself with me, and swear to me you will be my lover, I will release you from this peril, and supply you with provisions. Now she had a brother called Masrook, who was attached to a maiden whose master was one of Oorwah's men. So she said to him, What will you say to one who will bring you to your dear Wirdeh? How can that be? said he. Instantly run, said she, to Antar, son of Shedad, and give him intelligence of Basharah, and say to him, Master, bring me and my beloved together, and I will give you information about the designs of Rebia towards Basharah; and she told him all his distresses. The slave instantly departed, and coming to Antar's tents, he introduced himself, and related all the above. Antar was overjoyed at this news, and immediately sent for the master of the girl Wirdeh, and demanded her of him; he not only surrendered her, but gave her also a string of good he and she camels, and afterwards they all went to King Zoheir, to whom Antar explained all that had passed. King Zoheir was agitated and amazed: And what do you intend to do? said he to Antar. I am determined, he replied, to proceed to the tribe of Fazarah and release

this foreigner. O King, exclaimed Shas and Malik, we will also go and settle this business. Go, said their father; and Antar departed with the princes, but first said to Oorwah, O Ebeool Ebyez, mount your men, and tell them to conceal themselves in the valley of Yaamoora. Oorwah having executed his commands, they all proceeded till they reached the tribe of Fazarah, who, on seeing a dust arise, mounted, as also Rebia and Hadifah, to meet Antar and King Zoheir's sons. What! my cousin, said Rebia to Antar, art thou come to oppose us, or dost thou repent of thy obstinacy? O Rebia, said Antar, let him repent who has acted ill, and let him be ashamed of his disgraceful deeds. Produce Basharah, said Rebia, who said I bribed him to murder Ibla; let him confront me in the presence of these Arab chieftains. Be witnesses, ye that are present, exclaimed Antar. Drawing forth his invincible Dhami and urging on Abjer till he came up to the pit, he cried out to Shiboob, Bring forth this foreigner, and immediately Shiboob descended (O friends!) and brought out Basharah from the pit, from underneath the pack-saddles and camel-cloths. Ah! exclaimed Rebia in despair: and Hadifah said to him, I will stir up a battle between you and Antar; cry out in my name, and see what I will do. Upon this he shouted out, O Ebe Hidjar! Dost thou not mark this treacherous slave? And the men encountered each other, and the warriors engaged, and limbs were hewn off. Antar dispersed the people, and

penetrated towards Hadifah in the field of battle; he perceived him exciting his men to the contest; he engaged him, and struck the head of his mare, and hewed it off. Hadifah was in a most deplorable state, and his ribs were all dislocated. Then he met Rebia and Amarah, and took them prisoners, and despatched them with Shiboob and Basharah to the dwellings of the Absian chiefs. But when the sons of King Zoheir saw this terrible affair, and ascertained the treachery of Rebia, and that all he said was false and deceitful, they wheeled round their horses' heads, and went home to inform their father of the circumstance. But the chief Beder, when the account of what Antar had done reached him, mounted his horse, and came forwards in order to extinguish this dissension; he saw his son Hadifah on his return in a most shattered condition, who, on being questioned, related all that had passed, and how Antar had slain his mare and his men. By the truth of the pillar of stone of Mecca; he exclaimed, Antar must have had some consideration for you, or he would have left you dead, for he came to rescue his guest, and you irritated him. He galloped on to overtake Antar, as he saw him overthrowing his people. O Aboolfawaris, said he, we have always heard you were a most impartial man, but to-day we perceive you are inclined to violence and oppression. My lord, said Antar, I came here to release my friend from captivity, but your people stirred up this commotion and sought

to fight me, so to defend my own life was my bounden duty. O Aboolfawaris, said Beder, grant me this day this proof of your generosity, and Antar instantly ordered his men to depart; they desisted and went home. On the way they passed by the valley of Yaamoora, where they joined Basharah and Shiboob and their prisoners, Rebia and the wretch Amarah. Basharah came forward, and kissing Antar's hand, O Aboolfawaris, he cried, by the life of Ibla's two eyes, give me authority over Rebia and Amarah that I may parade them among the tribe of Abs. Do as you like, said Antar, for I know King Zoheir will not keep on good terms with me. And he thus expressed himself:

"O Ibla, thou art the light of my eyes: so com-
"mand my existence, and rule me, thou, my ulti-
"mate hope. If thou quittest the tribe of Abs,
"reside not in the mansions of degradation, and
"listen not to the railers, for the land after our de-
"parture will remain without any celebrated de-
"fender or hero. Ask of Fazarah concerning my
"deeds when they poured down upon me like a
"deluging cloud. They brandished their barbed
"spears in rage against me, but they beheld the
"refulgence of my dazzling scimitar. Let Beder,
"son of Amroo, inform you what a warrior am I;
"how I meet armies with a heart hard as a frag-
"ment of a mountain. I engaged their horsemen
"and they were dispersed, and my thrusts came
"upon them quicker than death. My steed bore

"me away; and as he went he slipped among the "skulls scattered by the sword and spear. I took "prisoners the chiefs of that mighty tribe, and I "returned overjoyed, like one intoxicated. O se- "paration! my heart trembles at separation, but I "weep not for the separation from friends and "native land, but for the separation from her, in "whose eyes is my malady, and truly this pains me "and increases all my vexations. I move in terror, "fearful of separation, as my enemies move trem- "bling through fear of me."

Oorwah felt aware he had spoken only the truth about the tribe of Abs. Then they all marched on till they came near home, when lo! there arose a great dust, and under it appeared some noble Absians on full gallop, and their spears pointed. These were King Zoheir and his sons, and his nobles with their standards over their heads, and horses scattered about. The reason of it was this: when Princes Shas and Malik returned home they made a great uproar among the tents, and related the fray that had taken place between Antar and the tribe of Fazarah; their father was much vexed. I was convinced, said he, this dispute between Antar and Rebia would not be decided amicably, and having inquired the particulars and its origin, Before we could reach them, said his sons, blood had flowed, and bodies were dead. Every one now mounted and came forth from the tents, and the people were all in confusion, and the families of Carad

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were in great tumult, and the women were abusing Antar. As soon as Antar saw King Zoheir and his sons, he dismounted and hastened forward, anxious to kiss his hand. King Zoheir stooped down and kissed him between the eyes, and ordered him to mount, and as they all departed home, Antar told King Zoheir about Rebia, and how he had taken him and his brother Amarah prisoners. But how is it, said King Zoheir, that I see them not with you? My uncle Malik, said Antar, has taken them home, who said, These fellows shall remain in bondage with me, till they restore the property they took from my daughter. Yes, indeed, said King Zoheir, your uncle shall do such a deed as this, when I am asleep and under the sand; but as long as I am on the back of my stallion, I will not permit an Arab to aggrandize you and degrade me. And King Zoheir evinced great wrath in his countenance till they reached the tents, and behold there came some fugitives, and behind them a horseman with a drawn sword in his hand. They contemplated the fugitives, and lo! they were Shedad and his brother. Now when Basharah took away Amarah and Rebia, and brought them to the Carad tents, he mounted them on two stripped camels, and placed them tail foremost, and proceeded crying them out through the tents, saying, This is the punishment, the lightest punishment for those who carry off their countrywomen to the Arab tribes. All the women of the tribe of Abs and Carad came to enjoy

the sight, and Ibla stood with her companions: she was superbly dressed, and all her sorrows had vanished. She was conversing and saying (whilst Amarah heard her), This is indeed but a small chastisement for you. You stole my property—you wanted to murder me—you made a pretty business of it—but God has requited you speedily. Amarah gazed at her, whilst she was glancing from right to left, and flaunting about in the most beautiful fascinating manner, and her words sank into his heart cooler than the purest water: he screamed, Alas! alas! for thee, O daughter of Malik! Oh! Oh! for the hour of possession! Be silent, thou dolt! said Rebia, for all this has happened to us on account of thy love, and never wilt thou desist from thy perverseness, till every vestige of us is rooted out. Now Cais, King Zoheir's son, had been left behind in the tents, and when the news reached him of what had happened to his friends, Rebia and Amarah, his pride was roused; he mounted and rode towards the Carad tents, bellowing like a lion, and the foam issuing from the corners of his lips; and when he saw Rebia, he wept, and raised his voice, and exclaimed: Alas! the disgrace of this violence from those bastards! Where is the respect of kinsmen? Sons of my uncle! where is the noble pride of illustrious Arabs? But Rebia continued in this abject state till Cais was quite shocked, and the whole country seemed obscured in his eyes. So he rushed upon Basharah, and struck

him with his sword; he cut him across the shoulders, and left him sprawling. He cried out to Antar's father and uncles, and they instantly disappeared from his presence, alarmed at his high rank and dignity, but not afraid of his prowess. And when they all left him, he untied Rebia and his brother; Go to our tents, said he; and he himself galloped after the family of Carad, till they launched out into the desert, where, perceiving the troops of King Zoheir returning with Antar, they speeded towards them: My son, cried King Zoheir, what is this affair? What stupidity has succeeded to modesty and good sense? He stopped and said, What discretion is there in man, when he sees the chiefs of his tribe degraded? And he related the story of Rebia, and the indignities Basharah had made him suffer, and finally said, O my father, I will never rest in this spot till I have satiated my vengeance against the family of Carad, and have put Antar to death. King Zoheir was distressed, and felt assured the sword must fall upon his tribe, and would disperse his people among the hills and plains; for the animosity between the families of Carad and Zeead could not be tranquillised: O Aboolfawaris, said he to Antar, depart with your party from this country, for these people will not let you alone, and you will not submit to any indignity, and this disturbance cannot terminate satisfactorily. So depart from us, and do what you please.

Antar expressed his obedience and submission; I

will instantly depart, said he, with my party, and if I am able, I will rescue my property, or will die in the attempt. Then he addressed himself to King Zoheir, and thus:

"Am I injured? and my spear and sword are "my defence, and the guide to glory is attached to "my bit. I have a two-armed power that can "struggle with lions and defend me. I am ho- "noured wherever I go. My person is respected, "and my station is not easily attained. I will "abandon these noble dwellings; but the lustre of "swords shall urge me on in the obscurity of the "dust. Cups of wine are at my disposal, but I "desire only the blaze in the fiery contest. I will "soon quit you; I want not your country, but I "will attack you on the wings of darkness. I will "seek my enemies with my lion-associates, each a "lion in the battle and the contest: I abandon "sleep, unless I can kindle a blaze at night-fall "that will involve my foes in a blast of fire. My "hand falls upon their heads like torrents of flakes "of fire in the dead of the night. Death they shall "behold exterminating their friends, and far shall "fly their heads hewn off by my sword. My com- "rades shall shake their spears in their hands, and "infuse death into the entrails of their opponents. "The brilliancy of their swords in the clouds of "dust shall be like the beauteous rays of the sun "through the rain. You have renounced my deeds, "but my power is my companion, and the blow of

" my Indian blade among the tents. I will aban-
" don the base and the dastardly, and I have drawn
" my sword for an ungrateful prince. O songstress!
" be thy song the neigh! for that is my music, and
" streams of blood my wine. Towards Ramda be
" my journey, for that is my abode, and the place
" for my tents. Speak not to me of the pleasures
" of life, for the attainment of my high ambition is
" my health and my sickness. In glory is the de-
" light of every one anxious for renown, not in
" drinking nor in eating. Shall I disgrace myself
" by submitting to dishonour, when my sword falls
" on the necks like an ostrich?"

Prince Cais cut short his verses; Hey, bastard! he exclaimed, you found Ibla in Shiban, and you come to claim her property from the tribe of Abs and Adnan. You should demand her goods from the people where you found her. My lord, said Antar, put not yourself into a passion, I am going to leave you, and shall look after my own affairs; but my adventures and my deeds shall soon reach you: you shall hear how I will rescue my property; but as to your expression of bastard, no one but yourself had ventured to make use of such language, or his death would have been at hand, and his exit from this world instantaneous. Then he addressed him, saying,

" I had made of thee a strong breast-plate to
" ward off from me the arrows of my foes, but it is
" thou that hast thrown them. In thee I placed

" my strong hold when ignominy should assail me
" on all sides; but if thou canst not preserve thy
" friendship as a protection for me, be then neither
" for me nor against me, at least, keep aside and
" be impartial, and let my enemies hurl their darts
" at me. From how many foes have I drawn blood,
" and from how many men have I desired to be re-
" moved! I dread not disgrace when alone, even
" when the battle destroys the horses and the horse-
" men. There are people who must either live
" great and renowned, or must hide their fall under
" the earth."

As soon as Antar had finished his verses, Strike the tents, he cried to his father and his uncles, and prepare for departure, that the heart of King Zoheir may be at ease, and my lord Cais have all his wishes fulfilled. They did as he directed, and they separated from the troops in order to seek the tents, when lo! loud screams arose, and plunder and pillage commenced among their dwellings; they hastened on their horses to ascertain what was the matter, indignation blazing in the heart of Antar: Verily our tribe have evinced their hatred towards us, he exclaimed, and he drew forth his sword, and threw himself among the tents. The cause of this was the family of Zeead; for they, as soon as Prince Cais had liberated them, and had set out to meet Antar, sought the Carad tents. Amarah entered the dwelling of Malik with the view of obtaining a look at Ibla; but Rebia wanted some

horse trappings, when lo! he saw the chests Antar had taken from him on the night-surprise, when he was wounded at Rikaya beni Malik: there he also found all the precious goods King Numan had given him: he recognised the whole. Hola! hola! he cried out, this is the property Antar took from me by force; it was he who wounded me, and he nearly killed me. Now when Cais had mounted in order to liberate Rebia, a crowd of slaves had followed him; This is all my property, said he to them, that I brought from King Numan: I have now found it at Antar's, so carry it away to your master's, Prince Cais, and I will give you a good share of it. As soon as the slaves entered the habitations to plunder the goods, the women began to scream out; but they seized the chests and all that was hung upon cords; so the maids and the slaves made an uproar, shoving each other upon the ground. When Antar heard these screams, he entered the tents, resolved to ply his sword among both chieftains and slaves. But King Zoheir seeing the affair become more serious, and the disturbances more furious, began to be much alarmed, and as it was near the close of the day, he cried out to his son Cais, Take away your friend Rebia, and order him to depart from us, and to go down to the barren desert: let him not kindle dissensions among the Arabs, and make us to become a common proverb. Do you too, Shas, go to Antar, and send him away without delay, and let there be no more said to us

on the subject. Cais repaired to the tents, and checking Rebia, prohibited any further tumult. So likewise did Shas and Malik; they sought the hero Antar, and when they joined him, they saw death glancing from his eyes: they stopped him with gentle expressions. O Aboolfawaris, said Shas, truly your separation from us is like the separation of souls from bodies, but no one can avert the decrees of the Almighty, his orders must be obeyed. Emigration is the most advisable plan for you: bear this event patiently, and act honourably. Do not be too much distressed, my cousin; all you desire in this world is Ibla, and she will be with you. My father will certainly repent of this deed, and calamities and horrors will descend upon him; and as to this property Rebia has taken away, it will revert to you after kissing your feet and your hands; for they will all stand in need of you. Had I known, said Antar, that this business between us would have come to this pass, I would have put Rebia to death, and had succeeded in all my wishes; but now his property has come to light, and he has it, and out of respect to you, I have not been able to do him any harm.

Antar took leave of Shas and Malik, his distress and agitation being extreme. He ordered the slaves to fasten the howdahs on the camels; they did all he told them, and they loaded them with the baggage and the families, and they left not a halter behind. They then departed, traversing the wilds

and the wastes, the plains and the mountains, amounting in all to two hundred and fifty famed warriors, one hundred and fifty belonging to the Carad division, and one hundred forming the party of Oorwah. As to Basharah, they bound up his wounds, and raised him on a tall camel, whilst Rabiat accompanied the women. The party proceeded till midnight, when Antar, Oorwah, and fifty horsemen alighted, saying to his father and his uncles, Do you go on ahead with the women. But he and Oorwah mounted at daylight and galloped over the plains till they came to the pastures of the tribe of Fazarah: the sun was just risen, and the cattle were grazing. Antar rushed upon them, and drove away all the he and she camels, and the high-priced horses that belonged to the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead, and when they had launched into the desert, Send on the plunder with thirty horsemen, said Antar to Oorwah; do you stay with me, that we may encounter the troops that will come upon us, with these twenty men. Oorwah did accordingly; the thirty went forward with the plunder, Antar and Oorwah slowly following them. As soon as the intelligence of the seizure of their cattle reached the tribe of Fazarah, they all mounted, but Hadifah was still weak from his fall, and was incapable of riding. The troop marched off in number five hundred, and with them four of Rebia's brothers. They went on till they overtook Antar, who, when he saw the horsemen, and heard their

shouts, turned upon them, and met them, and in less than an hour he had slain numbers of them, and wounded all four brothers. Oorwah and his people also slew those who were destined to die that day, piercing their chests with the points of the spear; extinction and perdition fell on the tribe of Fazarah. Antar smote off heads and skulls, and despatched the horsemen to the mansions of annihilation, crying out: Ye filthy Arabs, wherever ye go, Antar is behind ye: we are the persons who have taken the property of our enemies; who will now deliver you from our attack? Know, my cousins, said Haml, there is between Antar and the family of Zeead a most implacable animosity, and every one that interferes in it is destroyed and slain; and had I been aware that it was Antar who had seized the cattle, I would not on any account have gone out against him. So he turned his horse about, and he and the rest returned home, abandoning the family of Zeead. When Antar had taken possession of as many baggage-camels as he desired, he drove them on before him, and they all proceeded together till they overtook the cattle, and pursued the journey to Rikaya beni Malik, where the family of Carad had alighted, who, when they saw Antar's dust, mounted and saluted him, and seeing all the he and she camels he brought with him, they were greatly delighted. Here they halted to repose from their fatigues, and consult about the spot where they should fix their residence. I must, said Antar, go to the land of

Irak, and must labour in the utter destruction of the tribe of Shiban. But, said Shedad, O my son, do you not fear King Numan? No! exclaimed Antar, by the faith of an Arab, nor even the King of Persia, the lord of the balcony. O my brother, said Shiboob, if you wish to effect so much, and to battle with kings, come with me, and I will conduct you to the mountains of Radm and the valley of Raml, where ten men can defend themselves against the universe; and when we are in those mountains, you may engage warriors as many as you please, and the women will be secure. This is a most judicious arrangement, said Shedad, and a measure that cannot be found fault with; for I have heard of that spot, that the most timid can defend it, and its inhabitants must be safe. So they all agreed upon this point, and they reposed till the night was nearly passed, when they departed for that country.

Now this mountain was on the borders of Hidjaz, in the direction of Irak; it was stupendously lofty, and he who would look at it would imagine it was connected with the clouds; its summits rose so high towards the heavens, the sun could almost burn it with excess of heat and light: on its sides were caverns and caves, and trees, and fruits, and forests, the haunts of wild beasts and lions, and serpents. There was not a single road but windings and labyrinths that would bewilder the mind of man. It was like a strong fortress, and were ten men to

stand firm at the mouth of the defile, they would prevent the whole universe from reaching them; for there was no other path but by that gorge and defile, and between it and the tribe of Shiban they were seven days journey.

When Antar heard this description from Shiboob, he immediately assented to his proposal, and they set off traversing the wilds and the wastes; and he thus sang to them:

"Where is there a friend of sound judgment and "faith, now that the greatest part of mankind are "false? Fortune has betrayed me even where I "had most trusted it! And can my efforts now "avert calamities from me? One day they demand "my exertions in the field of battle, and one day "they complain of my excesses. If the foe pur- "sued me, I liberated myself, however impetuous "was his pursuit; and when my spear chooses, it "impedes every assault, and fate and my steed ex- "tricate me from every danger. But now, O hea- "vens! shall I succeed? or will the enmity of my "adversaries prevail? My horse, when the dust of "battle inclosed him on all sides, sprang against "the thrusts of the tribes. I will haste in pursuit "of the chase, though the parched earth should "rise in waves, or the onset of combatants environ "me. A party of Absians accompanies me, whose "high celebrity is extended over the deserts; they "are beautiful, like lions in every spot, when the "blood of their enemies is clotted over their jaws."

They continued their journey, travelling night and day, till they reached the mountain. The women alighted from the camels, and Antar entered the defile, accompanied by his father Shedad, his uncles, Oorwah and his companions; and when they had passed the entrance they perceived an intricate passage, and a valley abounding in forests, and they heard the roaring of wild beasts and the lions. It is impossible, said Antar, to dwell in this valley unless we burn down its sides with fire, otherwise there will be no security for our women against danger. So he ordered the slaves to light a fire in the forests, and they did so: and before evening the flames played in all quarters: the wild beasts were frightened and fled away, and dispersed. This continued for five days, and the snakes and the serpents were burnt. On the sixth day the flames ceased to blaze, and they entered the valley, and all danger was removed from them. Before sunset the tents were extended out, and the women and families entered: the mountains re-echoed their voices. And they soon became familiarized to their new abode, forgetting their native home, and their former friends and neighbours. Three days after, said Antar to his father, now that our property and families are in security, and that we have no occasion to harbour any fear of the Arabs, I am anxious to proceed against the tribe of Shiban, and punish them for their conduct: I must drive away their cattle, and take their families captive. We are few in number,

my son, said Shedad, and far away from home, and if we separate from our wives and families we cannot secure them from our foul foes. This is not to be dreaded, said Antar, for all our enemies are ahead of us, and we are in quest of them, they are not seeking us. My son, said Shedad, with how many horsemen do you intend to go against Shiban? A hundred brave fellows will be sufficient, replied Antar; the remainder I will leave with you. That is not right, said Oorwah, for the Shibanians are very numerous, particularly when Mooferridj shall return. That tribe cannot consist of less than five thousand bridles, besides confederates and neighbours; my opinion is we should set out from hence with one hundred and fifty men, leaving one hundred behind, and with this indeed we shall be undertaking a hazardous enterprise. Antar left with the families a hundred horsemen under the command of his father, and recommending them to be careful and vigilant, he and Oorwah departed with a hundred and fifty, fearless of the approach of death, and undaunted at fate even when it descends, for they were all bold intrepid fellows, and were also of the tribe of Abs and Adnan; and when Antar stopped on the road, his heart recollecting all his anxieties, he burst out thus:

" Calamities extend their arms against me; they
" oppose me, but I have resisted them. Vicissitudes
" of fortune stop and slumber, for my courage has
" drawn aside their mantle. Contend not with a

" man whose deeds the boldest warriors have ex-
" perienced in the contest; whose steed has stamped
" over the land of his enemies when he drenched
" their dwellings with blood. Woe to the tribe of
" Shiban! I have visited it, and dearly purchased
" war stretched out its arm. Dust rose on high,
" and its ocean swelled, and the bickering blade
" darted forth its lightnings. My spear plunged
" into their entrails, and burst through their armour
" and their ribs. Their women arose in lamentations
" for their husbands, who groaned in the agonies of
" death. O Ibla! for love of thee I feel a kindling
" flame; I have its anguish in the very folds of my
" bowels. On the day of my separation the fire of
" my spirit burst out, rocks even would have feared
" it. O Ibla, oft as the raven of the desert pours
" its plaintive note, to hear it in the dead of night
" fills my heart with sadness. I have quitted my
" home, and there are my neighbours, but their
" cupidity has cut off my society from them. Soon
" shall they see infamy when the horses of death
" rush out upon them. I am the son of Shedad
" who covets exaltation, and my ambition soars
" above them. Soon shall my lasting celebrity be
" sung, and in its report shall warriors feel the
" highest pleasure."

Antar continued his verses till Oorwah and his people were greatly pleased, and Oorwah was all astonishment. They travelled on towards Shiban, and death appeared easy and insignificant to them.

But Mooferridj, when he returned from his services in Persia, was very happy; he brought with him wealth fire could not have consumed. On his way home he stopped with King Numan, and staid as his guest for three days, and he related to him all that had happened to him in the cities of Khorasan. On the fourth day Mooferridj departed, seeking the land of Shiban, very anxious to revisit his native land; and when he reached his country, and his uncle Malik, son of Hosan, knew of his arrival, he went out to meet him, and congratulated him on his safety. Mooferridj alighted, quite delighted at his return home, and before even inquiring about his wife, he asked for Basharah. O my cousin, said Malik, son of Hosan, Basharah has reverted to his base origin, and he has done a deed no one ever did before. What has he done, my cousin? demanded Mooferridj. Know then, my cousin, said Malik, that your slave Basharah did not remain above twenty days after your departure, when he feigned having received a letter from you, stating, O Basharah, take away all my property and my treasures, and deposit them in the mountain of Radm and the valley of Raml, for I have suffered insupportable distresses in the service of the Persian monarch, and I am in the most deplorable condition. It is my intention to escape by flight if I find an opportunity. So he loaded every article in the magazines on the backs of the camels, and since then I have heard nothing of him, and I have had no

traces of him till lately, when a messenger came to me from Rebia, saying, Your slave Basharah is with Antar, and has restored to him his cousin Ibla. Antar has realized all his expectations, and has delivered over to him all the property he took away. He is now established with Antar in perfect happiness and contentment of heart, and he has done all this on account of his beloved Rabiat, a base-born girl. I am going to King Numan, and I shall acquaint him with this circumstance; but now here you are, so do what you deem best. At hearing this the eyes of Mooferridj turned red, and he clasped his hands one within the other in excess of rage and passion, exclaiming, O Malik, did we not murder Ibla, and did not the slave conceal her in the desert? How then has she appeared amongst the tribe of Abs and Adnan? As to that, said Malik, I comprehend it not. But Sinan, son of Abdoolazi, happened to be present; he was a knight of Shiban, and their champion when they were surprised by assaults night or day; Know, said he, O Mooferridj, that your slave Basharah did not slay Ibla as you ordered him, but he deceived you by his tale; he waited till the coast was clear for him, when he seized all your property, and repaired to the slave, a bastard like himself, where he leads a life of ease and comfort. Basharah shall do such deeds as this, exclaimed Mooferridj, when I am asleep or swathed in my winding-sheet, but as long as I can mount on the back of a steed and have

about me five thousand horsemen of Shiban, and behind me one like King Numan, my property shall not be pillaged; no one shall venture to dishonour my family. Send for your allies, cried Sinan, and those in whom you confide in your difficulties and your relaxations; lead us to the tribe of Abs that we may extirpate every vestige of them, and ravage their country, and level their boundary-marks with the ground, and leave not one of them to report the news, having first put to death their slave Antar. This would not be proper, said Mooferridj, for King Numan wishes to connect himself by marriage to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and to wed Mooted-jerede, King Zoheir's daughter; he has demanded her, and if we proceed against them without his orders, and execute such deeds upon them, he may blame us and be angry. But my opinion is that I should go to Numan and acquaint him with all these circumstances, and then he will send a message and liberate my property for me, my he camels and my she camels, and will give me directions to march against my enemies. Thus will we depart under his commands, and will slay Zoheir, and Antar his slave; we will exterminate his horsemen and his troops, we will capture every thing, and make prisoners the high and low, and we will not suffer our property to be plundered, or that slave Basharah to triumph over us. Do as you please, said Sinan; lead us whithersoever you choose, and we will gratify your wishes.

Each returned home and renewed his vows to his wife and family. But Mooferridj was so irritated at what had happened he could not stop longer than that day. He returned to King Numan, and in his heart there blazed a fire of rage against Basharah, and when he reached Hirah he rushed into the presence of King Numan like one frantic, on account of the loss of his property. But Numan was amazed at his speedy return. Is it well with you, Mooferridj? said he. No! he replied, infamy and misery! And he told him what had happened to him through his slave Basharah during his absence, and how he had seized all his property and possessions, and had repaired to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and was now established with Antar, son of Shedad. Did not you and Rebia, exclaimed Numan, inform me that you had assassinated Ibla, and had divided her property? Yes, said he, but we were not witnesses to her murder. We delivered her over to Basharah, and ordered him to put her to death, and bury her in the sand, and since that we knew nothing about it. Do not distress yourself, said Numan, for all you possessed shall revert to you, and the man who protected your slave shall be brought bound before you, for I am at this moment resolved on sending to King Zoheir to demand his daughter in marriage, and truly Rebia promised me to do so for me, but now indeed the affair is more serious in consequence of what has happened to you. At the instant he wrote

a letter to King Zoheir couched in these terms: Know, O King Zoheir, head of the tribes, that it is incumbent on us to improve the state of the Arabs It has reached me that your slave Antar has quitted the condition of servitude, and that you have extended to him your protection, and that you style him as you style your cousins. It would be advisable for you to pursue the established customs of the Arabs, and not bring down upon yourself destruction. You must order Antar to restore Mooferridj his slave, and all his property, and arrange this affair with him to our satisfaction, otherwise we shall punish him according to his acts, and shall send him back to tend camels and sheep. After this demand the marriage settlement of your daughter Mootejerede as much as you please, that we may send it to you. Do not send this messenger back but with a suitable reply, and act like a wise, prudent man, or you may repent of what you do.

He despatched his letter with a courier, who traversed the wilds and the sand-hills till he reached the tribe of the noble Abs, and he happened to arrive just two days after Antar's departure, so he came to King Zoheir, and saluting him, delivered to him the letter. He opened it and read it, and understood its contents. O Arab, he replied, your master mentions something about taking from Antar the property belonging to the tribe of Shiban. That man is no longer under my subjection that I can command him on any point; for between him and

us there have arisen troubles and dissensions. He quitted us two days ago, he and his uncles, and all the tribe that was connected with him. We have heard he has taken the road to Irak; had he remained, the two tribes would have been annihilated. In a short time he will be a neighbour of King Numan's in some direction, so let him gain information of him, and let him do as he pleases with him. But, moreover, we have no daughter fit for marriage; and had I a daughter I should not send her into a foreign land, and I shall not let any one have authority over her; and with this answer there is no occasion for a letter.

He gave him a robe of honour, and sent him to a house of entertainment. But the messenger declined, and retraced his steps in a great rage, and he did not stop traversing the deserts till he reached Hirah. He came before the king, and told him what had passed. His wrath and indignation were extreme; his passion blazed and flamed. If I do not degrade him, he cried, may I never possess his daughter! I must positively slay every one of them: I will destroy the whole tribe, every warrior of them. As to Antar, he must be heard of in some of the lands, and he sent the Arab and the Persian in quest of him. He afterwards requested his brother's attendance, whose name was Mozeed, but the Arabs surnamed him Prince Aswad (black prince). He was a shedder of blood; of excessive pride and arrogance; immense in form and bulk. He was

like a strong tower, and could receive on his chest a thousand horsemen in the field; and when he appeared before King Numan, the latter informed him of the news he had received, and communicated King Zoheir's answer, and that he had refused him his daughter in marriage. Aswad smiled—the smile of fury and indignation. O King, he cried, you are too mild and easy with your foes, and you excite the Arabs against you. A king must keep up the respect and awe of his station, or his supremacy will be subverted. It would be right to send me against King Zoheir, to devastate his country, and overthrow his troops and armies, and capture his wife and sons, and I will bring the whole with me into your presence, that you may have them at your disposal; otherwise you will be an object of shame far and near, and the Arabs will say King Numan demanded in marriage King Zoheir's daughter, who would not give his consent to his being her husband. This representation increased Numan's anger and wrath, and immediately he equipped his brother with ten thousand horsemen of the tribes of Lakhm and Djuzam, and directed him to set out. As soon as Aswad had departed, King Numan cared no more about searching for Antar, but continued every day to ride round the town with his attendants, and the chiefs of his government, together with Mooferridj.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was on the fourth morning after Aswad's departure, they roamed far into the desert, when lo! a dust arose, rolling from the direction of Shiban. In an hour the dust was divided and split, and its blackness was converted to a piebald hue, and under it appeared a troop of horse in full retreat, and horsemen scattered about in great disorder. At this, King Numan's ~~alarms~~ security gave way to ~~security~~ alarm; for they were shouting out, Save us! save us! King of the age: protect us from this calamity of day and night.

Mooferridj advanced to ascertain who they were, and lo! they were his own horsemen—his own cousins, and his own tribe. What has befallen you? said he; and what mortal has thrown you into this confusion? Antar, cried they all, came down upon us; last night he surprised us in the tents; he made our wives widows, and our children orphans; he seized what he pleased, and left what he pleased.

Mooferridj dashed his fists against his forehead; all patience, and even his senses, vanished. Well! at last he cried, with how many horsemen did he come against you, that he has treated you in this manner? O Chief, they replied, we only saw him with a few attendants.

Then said King Numan, whilst the world seemed obscure in his eyes, Tell us by what road he is gone. By God, said they, O King, we were like drunken men, and had not the senses of women. We should say he was actually in our rear, and that he was pursuing our very footsteps; but should not assistance reach us by the close of the day, indeed it will be evident, that Antar has captured all our families, and has taken the road of the mountains of Radm, and the valley of Raml. By the faith of an Arab, cried Numan, I will seek him out, were he even to mount up to the skies; and I will abandon all the free-born women of Abs to be purchased as slaves. But, to soothe the heart of Mooferridj, he continued, do not be uneasy at what has happened. Set out to-morrow for the mountains with the Shibanians, and take as many Arabs as you please; but if you vanquish this accursed slave, do not put him to death, bring him to me, him and his uncles, that I may hang them all at the gate of the city. Sinan was present: O King, by thy munificence, he cried, were I and Mooferridj not afraid of your reproaches, we had not brought this event upon ourselves.

They returned to Hirah, and having consulted about this important crisis till morning dawned, Mooferridj assembled the fugitives and his companions, amounting in all to a thousand horsemen, with whom he set out for their own country, whilst a flame was raging in his heart against Antar. Nu-

man also was desirous of going with them, with the horsemen of Lakhm and Juzam. No, no! said Mooferridj, it is not an affair to require your interference; and when he reached his own home, he saw the whole country ruined and plundered, and some few tents on the summits of the hills, and the women weeping and wailing. At this catastrophe his anguish increased: he inquired for his own wife and family, but could find no one to give him any information about them. Thus was his calamity heightened, and his misfortune increased, and so great was his affliction, he could not remain there above an hour, but set out with his brave army for the mountains of Radm, following Antar's track.

But Antar, having quitted the mountains as we described, continued his journey over the wilds and wastes, till he came near to the tribe of Shiban. He arrived early in the morning, and alighting at some retired spot, he sent Shiboob to gain intelligence.

Shiboob darted forth as a bird on the wing, and returned about mid-day, saying, O son of my mother, there are not in the dwellings more than a thousand horsemen. How is that? said Antar. Mooferridj, replied Shiboob, returned from the King of Persia full of joy and delight; but when he heard that Basharah had seized his property (for his cousin Malik, son of Hosan, had given him every information in consequence of Rebia having acquainted him by a message, that you had regained Ibla, and that all his property was in your hands); he suffered what

never happened to any one before. He instantly returned to King Numan to report this intelligence, and to consult about an expedition against the tribe of Abs, and to take vengeance on them. In the excess of his resentment occasioned by this catastrophe, he said to his cousin, Never will I drink of wine, till I can assuage my heart on that base-born Antar; and truly that tribe since his departure are all quite at a loss what to do, they seem careless of misfortunes, and are asleep, and feel secure from every calamity. The most advisable plan is, that you should rush upon the Shibanians under the cover of the night; and when you are near the tents, divide into three bodies, and trample down the whole tribe under the hoofs of your steeds. Thus will you attain your ends; thus will you succeed in all your projects.

By the faith of an Arab, exclaimed Antar, you have advised well. So he immediately mounted, followed by his men, and Shiboob preceded them like the northern blast till the day was spent, and night came on with impenetrable obscurity. The lights of the tribe shone upon them; but the night was utter darkness as it vaulted over the two horizons. They formed into three divisions, and shouted out in every direction: they poured down among the tents and dwellings, and plied their spears and their swords among the Shibanians. The east and the west were in commotion. The whole region was in convulsion; the country trembled beneath them;

the warriors started from their pillows; the hearts of the maidens palpitated; the virgins were made captives, and the horsemen expected to become prisoners. The darkness and obscurity stupefied their senses; all their movements and attempts were thwarted. The coward found no hole to creep out at: the horsemen sought relief from the pressure of the field of battle: the King of Death was firm in grasping souls. The sword continued its execution till the night became illumined, and the morning dawned in its brilliancy: the Absians were still engaged; their garments were as if painted with blood.

It had been indeed a most dreadful night: but Antar acquired all the glory and the honour; and he arose lord of the land of Shiban, master of their property and their women. He repaired to the habitations of their chiefs, such as Mooferridj, and Sinan, and Malik, and all the head men of the tribe; where he captured their wives, and drove away their daughters and children, slaying their cuckolded husbands. He took three of Mooferridj's wives prisoners, and four of his cousin's daughters, all of whom were most accomplished females. Oorwah and his people, and the family of Carad, obtained all the noble steeds and camels, and they departed for the mountains of Radm, leaving their enemy's country ruined, and all its vicinity destroyed; and they continued their march till between them and their friends there was only one day's journey.

So in the morning they came near the country

whose mountain sides had been burnt; when Antar spied out ahead a tremendous dust increasing upon them, and a lofty cloud of sand rising over them. Do you see that dust? said Antar to Oorwah, what can there be beneath it? Oorwah extended his ken towards it, and he perceived a dust approaching, rising to an immense height; it augmented, and the black column was advancing upon them. O Champion of the Absians! said Oorwah, I do indeed perceive a towering dust coming towards you. I think it must be some booty that God has sent to you. Let the horses be rested, said Antar, after their hot march. So they rested them, whilst the men prepared their warlike weapons, and fixed their spears. Antar stationed forty to take charge of the property, and the remainder advanced like stern lions, in number one hundred and ten horsemen. They marched on till the dust came near to them, when they heard issuing from it loud screams and tumultuous shrieks, every thing proving some dreadful disaster and calamity; and the general cry was, O by Abs! O by Adnan! who will protect the Absian women? who will release their captive females?

As soon as Antar heard these clamorous voices, he shuddered. We are ruined, O Ebe ool Ebyez! he cried; good God! what Arabs can have overpowered us, and brought this misfortune upon us? Who can have dared to insult us, lions of the dens as we are?

Now the cause of all this was Rebia, who as soon

as he returned to the tribe of Fazarah, and heard that Antar had plundered his property, and had driven away his horses and camels, went to Hadifah, gnawing his hands from very passion. O Ebe Hidjar! said he, how careless you have been of us this time! and how you have failed in protecting us! and we are your neighbours. O Rebia, said Hadifah, had I not been much debilitated by the effects of the fall, I would not have failed in protecting your property in this emergency. I did not know it was Antar that had made this predatory assault, or I would not have been kept away from him, even had my life tasted of horrors; but I imagined they were some rapacious Arabs; so my brother and yours went out, and with them a body of horsemen, whom I enjoined to make every exertion in settling the business, and to bring back the horses and property; but they returned routed and disgraced, and when I learnt this circumstance, I became as if drunk without wine: but if I do not overtake that Antar, and gratify my hatred in his death, I shall die without the affliction of any disease. O my cousin, said Rebia, I cannot possibly remain here after this degradation.

So they all made preparations from that day, amounting in all to seven hundred horsemen, all well-trained warriors, and they set out in pursuit of Antar, in despite of the prohibitions of the Sheikh Beder, for they would not listen to him, but traversed the barren wastes and wilds. Know that we

are proceeding against the consent of our father, said Haml to Hadifah, and we have rebelled against the Sheikhs of our tribe. I fear this expedition will terminate ill, so that we shall incur the reproaches of our countrymen, and not one of us will be able to reside among them. My advice is, that we should pass in our way to the tribe of Marah, our ally, in which we confide in our difficulties and our relaxations, and take with us their champion Zalim, son of Harith, with a party from their clan and noble warriors. Then indeed we shall succeed in our projects and attempts, and shall take our vengeance on that Antar, even had he with him the tribes of Themood and Aad. This would be a great disgrace said Hadifah, that we, who boast of our descent and rank—that we, exalted among the Arab chieftains, should not be able to redeem our rights from a wretch of a slave, but must incite against him the horsemen of other tribes.

Haml had been induced to address his brother on this subject on account of the dread he felt in his heart of Antar. Rebia joined him, for he knew that this knight whom Haml had mentioned would accomplish all their desires. Now this Zalim was a knight of the tribes of Marah and Dibyan, and he was a great object of astonishment in those days; and in addition to the superiority he assumed over the other Arab chiefs, on account of his extreme intrepidity, he boasted of a sword he had inherited from his father and ancestors. It was called Zool-

hyyat (endued with life), for when it was unsheathed, it was impossible for any one to fix his eyes on it, on account of the extraordinary effect and imaginary sensations it produced. It was said that it had been the sword of the great Jobaa, son of King Himyar, who was formerly monarch of the universe: and when it fell upon a rock, it would cleave it in two; and did it encounter steel, it shattered it; and when it moved, it glittered and sparkled, and over its sides there crept the wavy forms of biting snakes. Zalim was so delighted with it, that when he went to bed, he had it within his arms, and by day he was never apart from it. It is thus described in this distich:

"In no trouble, in no adversity do I fear death,
"when it confronts me; for how can I dread the as-
"saults of death, and Zoolhyyat is glittering in my
"right hand?"

So when Haml mentioned Zalim, Rebia immediately coincided with him. At last they brought over Hadifah to their views, and travelled on till they reached the tribe of Marah. There they alighted, and were hospitably received. Rebia informed Zalim of the circumstance of Antar, and the troubles they had endured. In the excess of his pride, Zalim smiled; By the faith of an Arab, said he, the tribe of Abs deserves to be degraded on account of their conduct towards this despicable, insignificant slave, and all the disgraceful events that have befallen you are owing to your Chief Zoheir.

It was he who admitted him to the rank and consideration of an Arab. I am not unwilling to attend you on this expedition, neither does the danger or trouble annoy me. I am only distressed on account of my sword Zoolhyyat, that it should be contaminated with the blood of slaves, the offspring of carcasses.

Then having entertained them for three days, he set out with them, accompanied by five hundred noble horsemen on celebrated steeds, eagerly pursuing Antar, and continually demanding intelligence of him in the deserts and the cities, till they heard that he was in the mountains of Radŵ, and the valley of Raml. May God curse the father of his beard, and may he be afflicted with unspeakable calamities! Does he think thus, exclaimed Zalim, that mountains can protect him from me, or that the defile can defend him? By the faith of an Arab, verily will I make him taste of the wine of misfortunes. They proceeded in the right direction, having obtained a trusty guide. But as to Amarah, the world could not contain him, for now he felt secure that Antar would at any rate be slain, and that Ibla would console him for all his sorrows; and when they came near to the valley and the two mountains (there being only two days between them), a slave belonging to Rebia met them as he was seeking the land of Hidjaz. My masters, said the slave, in answer to their inqŵiries, know that Antar is gone against the Shibanians, with one

hundred and fifty brave fellows: and there only remain one hundred more to protect the wives and women; and had not he and Shiboob been absent, I could not have escaped.

When they heard this, they were much delighted: Truly, said Hadifah, the business has turned out as you wished, and every difficulty has been rendered easy. Arabs, cried Zalim, how have we gained our point, if Antar does not fall, and is not vanquished? By the faith of an Arab, our trouble is misspent, and our pains are only increased. O Chief, said Hadifah, we will content ourselves with capturing their wives, and we will return home: Antar indeed will be safe, but if we do not kill him, we shall kill many of his party. O Hadifah, said Rebia, let us first carry off the goods and families we shall find in the mountains, and then continue the pursuit of Antar, wherever he may be, and when we have extirpated him, we will go to King Numan, and will represent to him the necessity of his sending his brother Aswad to King Zoheir, to drive him into his presence, and force him to give his daughter to him. I will give Ibla in marriage to my brother Amarah, and will make a marriage-feast, the equal of which no chiefs ever prepared: then we will return home, and be quiet and comfortable. Truly, said Amarah, I am of your opinion on this point, O Rebia; for I am quite sure Ibla was only created for me, and her charms will only coalesce with mine.

They continued their journey without delay till they reached the mountain, and the dust they occasioned appeared like the black shades of night. The Absians that were reconnoitring soon discovered them, and immediately gave notice of the circumstance to the horsemen, and shouted through the mountains. Shedad and his brothers mounted with the hundred horsemen, and the whole land was in confusion with the screams of the women and maidens, whilst the men hurried out to the defile and pass, having first enveloped themselves in steel.

The horsemen of Fazarah soon came in sight, the troops divided, and they all made one universal shout, making the whole country tremble. They attacked the Absians like tall furious sea-monsters, headed by Zalim, as he poured forth the bellow of devouring lions, and drew out his Zoolhyyat. In a moment the parties encountered, and they exhibited their fury, shouting in the name of their fathers and ancestors, and struggling in the battle and the contest; the sharp-edged scimitars and long spears laboured among them, and foes and enemies exulted over them; but numbers multiplied upon the Caradians after they had engaged at the entrance of the strait, like brave men, who fear disgrace; and though difficulties increased upon this small party, they preserved the head of the defile, and plied the thrust and the blow. But when Zalim perceived that their courage still protected

them in that spot, he dismounted with a party of horsemen, and penetrated through the defile. There the battle began to rage—blood was spilt, and the fire of contention blazed till Zalim had slain seven of the Absians, and had driven the remainder into the valley.

Rebia and Hadifah, seeing what Zalim had done, also dismounted, followed by their party, and thus occupied the defile. But when the women perceived this calamity, they uncovered their heads and let fall their hair, and there was not one but was convinced of captivity and misfortune; and about mid-day the tribe of Fazarah effected their entrance; they bound the Absians as prisoners, and took possession of their women and property. They drove away the camels, and they all issued forth from the mountains. Basharah fell into the hands of Rebia, who gave him a cruel beating. Amarah reproached Malik, Ibla's father. You abandoned your family and your clan, said he, and you have followed the advice of this black slave, and these are some of his blessings that have now happened to you, and he will most certainly drown you in a sea of calamities.

Shedad heard this speech. O son of Zeead, he cried, let it suffice that you can abuse my son in his absence, for he would have brought down on you his severest punishments, and know that nothing will last, and he will assuredly come in this direction. Every one of ye will feel his frown—and

every one of ye will repent of this deed. This passed; they pursued the tract of Antar, the women and children going before them, but Zalim staid behind with the chieftains of the tribes of Marah, and boasting of his arts, he thus exclaimed:

"Is it thy teeth, O lovely girl, that smile, or is "it the lightning that draws its sword before me? "Is it thy form, or the branch of the palm, that "waves to the zephyr, as it resembles the date-"tree? O daughter of Aamir, do not disdain the "dust whose brightness gives brilliancy in the dead "of the night. If thou art ignorant of me, ask the "tribe of Abs, when I brandished my scimitar; "I surprised their horsemen in the defile, my sword "cleft their flesh and their bones—I drove away "their women when I had reduced their virgins "to consternation and mourning. How should a "worthless slave protect the wives of the noble, or "be able to preserve his engagements? He shall "soon see, if he comes alive, that my sword can "act when death even is still: it is the destiny of "the world when crowds rush round our dwellings. "But what glory is there in this contest, that my "sword should descend upon a dastard slave! "Where in the combat is there one like me when "my scimitar flashes its fires? All mankind lie "beneath my sword, and with me right and wrong "are confounded."

When Zalim had finished his verses, the horsemen were delighted at his poetry and prose, and

extravagantly was he flattered by Rebia and the wretched Amarah. They continued their journey till the next day, about three hours after sunrise, when they met the hero Antar. Amarah happened to be in the van, looking at the women, and surrounded by a body of the tribe of Fazarah and Marah, and talking to Malik, son of Carad, till eyes fell upon eyes, and Antar's slaves shouted out on his arrival; he heard the screams of the women, and his indignation became most violent: he attacked the family of Zeead, and pierced the first through his chest, and the barb started out between his shoulders; he urged on, and struck the second, and he rolled him over in the sand. As soon as the horsemen saw this accident, their reason deserted them, and they felt assured this must be Antar. So they shrunk to the rear, the despairing Amarah at their head, crying out, Fly, my cousins! The slaves of the family of Carad crowded together upon them, and plied their sharp swords among them, shouting out, Hey! Antar is come against ye, and to-day will he requite you for your deeds towards the women and children. In a short time the men were all released from captivity. Antar advanced towards Ibla, and saluted her; he also ordered Shiboob to release his father's women and his uncle's, whilst he and Oorwah went forwards with one hundred horsemen to meet the foe, leaving the remainder to protect the females.

Amarah came up to his brother Rebia and Ha-

difah, and meeting the troops, exclaimed as above, and the whole desert was in confusion. What is the matter with thee? asked Rebia. What has happened to thee? What has appeared unto thee under the black of the dust? Antar has appeared against us, they cried out, he is slaying our brothers and our cousins, and has come up with the women and the children, and taken the property, the camels, and the infants, and had he not been occupied with Ibla, he would not have left one of us alive, not a white or a black. Prepare your warlike weapons, cried Rebia, and be ready for the conflict. Zalim rejoiced in the news, and he was much delighted at Antar's arrival; he gave the reins to his horse, and he galloped after the horsemen, the heroes and warriors following him. When lo! Antar appeared before them like a lion in armour, and as his companions followed him, he cried, Ye sons of ordure, you have pursued us from your homes, and have gained over to fight against me the tribes of Marah and Dibyan, and you conceive yourselves secure from the calamities of day and night. He instantly unsheathed his sword and assaulted—the desert was in tumult—all promiscuously crowded—attack and defence was the word—swords made hot work—the coward sought to fly, but found no way to escape. The irresistible brave stood firm, and the scimitars neither spared friend nor foe. The blows of Antar fell more powerful than the stones of an engine; he dispersed whole troops, and mangled them dreadfully;

he encountered Zalim and Hadifah in the middle of the field of carnage, and they were also eager in quest of him; but Hadifah being the nearest to Antar, thrust at him with his spear, saying with a loud voice, Take that, thou son of a slave, I am Hadifah, the son of a free-born woman. When Antar perceived the thrust directed towards him, he parried it off very skilfully; he roared at Hadifah, and turning round the barb of his spear, he struck him with the butt end, and sent him rolling over on his head. He then sought Zalim, and wanted to treat him as he had done Hadifah, but Zalim smote Antar's spear and broke it, and just as he attempted to close with him, Antar howled, and he was horror-struck; he smote him with the remnant of the spear on his chest, and it palsied him, the end of the spear grazed on Zalim's elbow-bone; it paralysed every nerve, and forced him to let go his sword; Antar rushed upon him, he grappled him, and seized him by the rings of his corslet, clung to him, and took him prisoner, and gave him over to his comrades, wretched and degraded! That is right, cried Shiboob, seize these cuckolds, that I may bind them fast; come on! now to the others. Antar commenced the conflict, and he pierced the chests of the combatants; he exhibited all his powers, and he extended the heroes right and left. Shiboob in the mean time had secured Zalim and Hadifah. Oorwah and his people, with his uncles who had been released, accompanied

Antar. Rebia being alarmed, lest he should be disgraced and overwhelmed, had nothing for it but to scamper off and escape. Antar made hot work in their rear, and the brave were irresistible in their assaults. Only one hundred escaped out of the thousand, and they were mounted on swift steeds. The tribe of Abs returned, and darkness obscured the land, whilst Antar stood before them, as if bathed in a sea of blood. Having collected the booty, they passed on, and early in the night they came near to the mountains, and by day-break they entered with the prisoners of Fazarah, and those of Marah and Dibyan, all bound fast with cords. The slave-women preceded them with the cymbals and dulcimers, and joy was universal among them. Early in the day they entered, and it was a most glorious morning for them; they pitched the tents and pavilions, and stretched the tent-ropes; but the happiest of the party was Basharah, whom Antar had released from the power of Rebia. But they had only been established one day in that valley, when the next morning the dust of the tribe of Shiban, with Mooferridj, arose upon them. The troops were extended right and left, and the warriors and heroes came forth. The Absians, as soon as they saw them, prepared for the engagement; the polished steel glittered in their hands, and the burnished armour flashed with the brilliancy of lightning. They rushed out of the defiles and pressed forward for the battle and the contest. When the

Shibanians saw them advancing, Do you see that black slave? exclaimed Mooferridj; how his presumption has overpowered his reason? he has even quitted the mountain, and intends to attack the tribe of Shiban and its five thousand warriors, and he has scarcely two hundred and fifty vagabond horsemen. The fault is not his, but the fault is with him who has obliged us to fight him, and that is Rebia, who was the cause of all this disturbance. Be not surprised at what Antar is doing, said Sinan, for truly he is anxious for the carnage of death. It happened that Rebia had decided on escaping at the first onset, so he fled till he reached the tribe of Shiban, and as soon as they recognised him, they asked what was the matter; he informed them of all that happened, and wept at the severity of his misfortunes. Comfort your mind and brighten up your eye, cried Mooferridj, for we are marching in quest of Antar, and we shall certainly overwhelm him, and reduce him to distress in his property and family. Mooferridj related to him the affair of Prince Aswad and his expedition against the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and all the arrangements of his brother King Numan. So Rebia was consoled with this intelligence, and he returned with them that he might enjoy the spectacle of Antar's destruction, and release his brother Amarah from misery. For he saw their number amounted to five thousand, all warriors,

brave and intrepid, and with them was their celebrated knight Sinan, and they were marching under the orders of King Numan. By the faith of an Arab, said he to himself, Antar cannot escape this time. Thus they eagerly pressed their march till they approached the mountains of Radm, as we have mentioned, and Antar went out to meet them, as we have described. And Sinan said to Mooferridj, that Antar would certainly seek the contest. O Sinan, said Rebia, Antar is never fatigued, never harassed, and in his heart he is only anxious to meet you, and succeed in his attempts against you, and were you even to fill the plains and the mountains, he would still come out against you, and be only the more eager to encounter you; for he would be saying in his soul, that he would annihilate ye all, high and low, and that he would carry off your property and your plunder. When Sinan heard this, he roared and started forth in quest of Antar, thus exclaiming:

"Hast thou captured my women and seized my "property, bastard slave, thou camel-driver! Shall "I remain dispirited and in disgrace, and my sword "sparkle, brilliant and polished? My spear, when "I brandish it in the palm of my hand, will dive "through the strong-ribbed mountain. Shame, O "Fortune! that a slave should conquer, and the "chiefs and lords be discomfited! Were she im-"partial, this scum of men would not stride the

" noble steeds. But, O daughter of my uncle,
" grieve no more, though the nocturnal vicissitudes
" have separated us! As to fortune, it is two days
" sweet and one bitter; and among men there are
" two sorts, the base and the noble. How many
" exalted tribes have I overwhelmed! I have re-
" turned, and their warriors in captivity; and how
" many flames of fire have I kindled with the edge
" of my sword on the chests of the noble com-
" batants!"

When the Shibanians heard Sinan's harangue, and perceived that he was preparing for the slaughter, his men galloped forward, most desirous to release their wives and families, directing their spear points towards Antar, and one thousand were the number that followed him. Antar, being aware of their intent, took with him his father Shedad and his uncles Malik and Zakhmetuljewad, and Amroo, Ibla's brother, and altogether thirty of the family of Carad. Stay here, said he to Oorwah, with these hundred horsemen and occupy Sinan, whilst I repulse the troop that accompanies him, and I will soon return to you. Antar made the attack against the thousand horsemen, and rushed down upon them, impetuous as a torrent; he charged among them east and west, and overwhelmed them with thrusts and blows; and he never dashed into a division, but he dispersed it, nor a troop but he crushed it; and thus also acted his brother Shiboob, the dust-coloured dragon. He never se-

parated from his horse Abjer, but protected him from the blows of the warriors; whilst his father Shedad and the horsemen kept up a fierce conflict, and in less than an hour the troop retreated from the dust and the darkness, a hundred of them being slain, and more wounded. By the faith of an Arab, said Mooferridj, we have fallen into a most dreadful misfortune, we did not lay our account to this; in fact, thirty horsemen have been able to effect all this destruction, and the party, though only consisting of two hundred and fifty, will at this rate be equal to ten thousand, and we consist of only five thousand, and the remainder, how shall we answer them? My advice, cried Rebia, is, that your should attack with the tribe of Shiban, and overpower them with the horsemen, otherwise we cannot succeed; overtake your cousin Sinan, that Antar may not kill him in the field of battle. Mooferridj shouted out to his men, and they instantly unsheathed their swords, and brandished their spears, and the universe was in convulsion at their shouts. Above three thousand joined them in the assault, and in a formidable charge sought the defile and the mountain. At that time Antar had returned to his companions, and he found Sinan coming back with the tribe of Shiban, and with them Oorwah as his prisoner: a numerous host surrounded them. Now Sinan, when Antar left him, attacked the hundred horsemen, and assailed them with his sword; he routed them, and

made them retreat into the mountains, having slain thirty. He also resolved on penetrating into the defile, and releasing the women of Shiban; but Oorwah again assailed him, and prevented him; they fought for an hour, but Sinan saw his companions were cut up, and that only five hundred stood firm with him, the remainder having taken to flight, whilst others checked him from coming up with Antar. Aware of this disaster, and seeing how the shouts arose over him, his passion and fury increased; so he closed with Oorwah and grappled him, stopping all means of escape, and extending towards him his mighty arm; he seized him by the rings of his armour, and held him fast. Thus having taken him prisoner, and delivered him over to some of his men, he turned about to attack Antar, who was also in quest of him. He dispersed his horsemen and his troops, and as Sinan stretched out his spear at him, and cried out at him, and thrust at him, Antar smote the spear and shivered it: thus parrying him off till he came close to him, he pressed on him, and struck him with the flat of his sword, and tumbled him off his horse. Shiboob pounced on him and bound him fast, and tied his arms and his sides. As soon as the Shibanians saw this terrible event, they abandoned Oorwah cast upon the sand, and escaped by flight towards Mooferridj; the troops were all scattered and discomfited. Shouts arose on all sides, and the dust thickened to the east and to the

west. Antar cried out to the noble Absians; they were on the alert, and brandished their spears and their swords; the thrusts were incessant and overpowering, and the voice of the speaker was silenced: they seized each other by the chin and the throats, and every path and road was choked up with the warriors. But God prospered Antar and the wonders he did that day, as also his horsemen and tribe, and his father Shedad and his uncles.

Oorwah soon sprung again on the back of his horse, and allayed his heart upon the tribe of Shiban. The scimitar continued to cleave, and blood to flow, and men to rave and fall, till the day closed and was obscured, and night coming on, each division retired and separated. The tribe of Abs alighted at the entrance of the defile to guard it against invasion or surprise; but Antar ordered Shiboob to take Sinan to the valley, and tie him up with the other prisoners. The tribe of Shiban also alighted, and their ruin and rout was evident. Mooferridj endured more than ever went to the heart of man, on account of the capture of his cousin Sinan, and the destruction of so many of his horsemen. 'Thou mine of fraud and deceit, roared he at Rebia, by the faith of an Arab, had I thrust at Sinan my cousin for a whole day, I should never have gained my point against him, and never should I have been able to touch him, ere fatigue had enervated my arm; but this infernal slave has taken him prisoner in an instant, and truly I shall pass

this night in a state of stupefaction; for if I go out against him, I shall become a scandal among the Arabs; and if I do not attack him, we shall not succeed in our expectations. Take my advice, said Rebia, clothe yourself in brilliant steel to-morrow morning, and march your troops against him, and let not one of your companions remain behind; smite their horsemen and warriors with the sword, till you drive them to the defile, and then enter after them; thus will you succeed in your hopes; and should every one of them slay ten of yours, and even more, you will then even have the advantage with the remainder. This, Rebia, is advice becoming you! he replied, this is your sagacity! your wit! how! shall we hasten the men upon Antar, and leave him to charge upon our flanks, and play upon us with his sword and his spear? By the faith of an Arab, had not the day closed upon us, not a spot of ground would have been left for any one, but had turned his face to the desert and the waste. Thus they continued wrangling till the armies of obscurity departed. And as soon as it was day, the Shibanians started up ready for the fight and the contest; they fixed their spears and prepared to exterminate lives. But the first who shone on the plain and the scene of blows and thrusts was Antar. He galloped and charged, and urged his Abjer to the theatre of contention, and thus expressed himself:

"The morning of thrusts in the field of battle

" (where wine is not put round in glasses), is dearer
" to me than the varied amusements with the cup,
" and the ewer, and the flowers. My wine is in-
" deed that which gushes about the spear's point,
" when the war-steeds trample. I am the slave, of
" whom it shall be reported that I encountered a
" thousand free-born heroes: my heart was created
" harder than steel, how then can I fear sword or
" spear? I have met the chargers, and I cared
" not: I am raised above Arcturus, and the Lyre
" or the Eagle: when the warrior beholds me, he
" avoids me, his courage fails, and he flies. Ye
" have indulged, ye people of Shiban, a thought,
" but my horse and my perseverance have thwarted
" your imagination. Ask Rebia of me when he
" came against me with the chiefs of Beder. I
" took their chiefs prisoners, and only quitted them
" when I had dispersed them over every desert.
" Here now I again come forth, and in you will I
" appease my heart and allay my bosom; I will
" seize the property of Ibla with my sword, and
" the lord of the balcony shall acknowledge my
" power."

As soon as Antar had terminated this address, he sought the contest, and the flame was kindled afresh in his bosom. Mooferridj sprang on his horse's back, and being cased in his armour, he thundered down to the field of battle, and charging to and fro, exclaimed: Thou vile slave, it is disgraceful, infamous, and ignominious, to fight with thee!

But Antar sent forth a shout at him that would have split a stone. Mooferridj received him as the parched earth the first of the rain. They gave two yells, that excoriated the ears of their horses, and made every limb of the horsemen tremble. They commenced the engagement. Rebia was much alarmed for Mooferridj, that Antar should overpower him. It was not judicious in Mooferridj to go out against this devil, said he, and I fear some accident will happen to him. To which Malik, son of Hosan, replied, By the faith of an Arab, this calamity was all owing to you. Son of Zeead, had it not been for you, we should never have known this Antar, neither would our wives and children have been made captives; and as he was preparing to make an assault, lo! a yell arose from under the dust, and some one cried out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! I am the lover of Ibla, and I stand alone in the world! They all eagerly gazed at the dust, and behold Antar, who had taken Mooferridj prisoner, driving him as he would a camel. He gave him over to Shiboob, who bound him fast by the shoulders, and took him away to the other prisoners. Antar perceived that the Shibanians had dismounted, and were waving their spears and unsheathing their swords; but he was not to be intimidated at this. By the faith of an Arab, he exclaimed, I will put them all to the rout, and will not leave one to know whither he is going. Then shouting out to Oorwah and his father Shedad, he

selected fifty brave horsemen. Guard the entrance of the pass and defile, he cried, and he roared out to the troop that was with him, and they split the enemies troops into two parts, and made them drink of death. The horror and distress were excessive, and the day became like the night. They continued to plunge through the Shibanians till they came into their rear, where Antar, perceiving the horses running loose without their riders, said to his comrades, Collect them from right and left, and turn their faces towards their owners, then goad them on with the points of the spears, and they will trample down their own masters. So they separated towards the horses, and collected them all into one body, and sending forth a tremendous shout at them, goaded them with the points of their spears. A black cloud of dust arose; they plunged among the men on foot, and trod them down with the stamp of a camel, whilst the Absians roared at them from the interior of the valley. None escaped but those whose lives God had lengthened. Lucky was he whose horse speeded away with him and rushed over the waste and plains.

Malik, son of Hosan, was one of those who escaped, and also Rebia secured himself with a party of his people, and he was gnawing his hands through mortification and shame. O my cousins, all this has happened to us on account of this dog-devil, cried Malik to the Shibanians, pointing at Rebia; had it not been for him we had never known Antar

nor Ibla, nor one of the race of Abs. So come on and have at him. Thus saying, he made towards him, as Rebia also advanced to congratulate him on his safety, but Malik struck him with his spear through the shoulder, and it came out under his armpit, and hurled him off his horse on the ground, weltering in his blood, and he thought he had slain him. Thou son of a foul mother, cried he, all our misfortunes originate in your hatred towards that bastard slave. Moreover, the Shibanians put twenty of Rebia's party to death, and the remainder fled over the country. But as to Antar, he ordered them to open a way for the horse to the mountains, whilst he pursued the race of Shiban till he came up with Rebia. O Ebeool Ebyez, said he to Oorwah, dismount, go to him and bind him: truly his treachery has reverted on himself. Oorwah alighted and tied his arms, and as he was going to raise him on a horse, he opened his eyes, and recovering his senses, he saw Antar standing over his head. O my noble cousin, exclaimed the wretch, have some consideration for the relationship between you and me. Bind up my wounds, but tie not up my arms. I am almost dead, and indeed I sorely repent of all I have done to you. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, you shall never be in a situation to repent the foul deeds you have already done towards me. You only call me cousin when you have tumbled into some intolerable calamity. So they all returned to the mountains, and all the

party was relieved from sorrow, for their evening was more propitious than the morning. He placed Shiboob, and Jareer, and Basharah, as guards over the prisoners; and those that were most grievously afflicted and distressed were Mooferridj and Sinan, for Basharah was stationed to torment them.

Antar reposed that night in the most perfect delight with his friends and troops, till the obscurity being nearly dissolved, he assembled the chiefs, and as they were consulting, said Shedad to Antar, O my son, what have you resolved on doing with your prisoners? As to Zalim, and Mooferridj, and Sinan, I shall hang them; but as to Rebia, and the wretch Amarah, I shall detain them in bondage till they restore the property they took from Ibla. He arose instantly, intoxicated as he was; his head rested on Oorwah's shoulder, and he came to the door of the cavern where the prisoners were confined, and said to Shiboob, Raise up this cuckold, that I may hang him up on the summit of the mountains, and range these other fellows by his side. When the party heard this they felt certain of death. As to Amarah, he was almost dead already, and he remained fixed in stupefaction, for when he looked at Antar he saw his eyes red as coals. O Aboolfawaris, said Mooferridj, delay your work, for the end of violence is never praiseworthy. As to us, you first took our property, captured our families, slew our men, and devastated our country; what, therefore, is our crime that we have merited death

and hanging? And what crime, said Antar, can be more enormous than this? you seized my property, you captured the daughter of my uncle, you even attempted to slay her, so I must absolutely extirpate the tribe of Shiban. It was your cousin Rebia, said Mooferridj, who told me to do so, and am I to be adjudged deserving of extermination, root and branch? But know that the property that I took from your uncle's daughter is now with King Numan: truly the affair is well known, and the secret now quite public, for Rebia sold the tiara and turban for he and she camels, and I placed my slaves in deposit in the land of Irak. It will be well for you not to be too hasty with me, that I may contrive some means to liberate it, and restore it all to you; and thus I may rescue my person and my wife out of your hands. Do what you please with your cousin Rebia, and if you have any doubts as to what I have said, and think I am deceiving you, I can tell you still further particulars. On what subject can you give me any intelligence? demanded Antar. Know, O Aboolfawaris, said Mooferridj, that King Numan has sent his brother Prince Aswad against King Zoheir with ten thousand horsemen, and he has engaged to drag before him King Zoheir in his grasp on account of us, and on account of his daughter Mootegerede. I am convinced King Zoheir must fall, and will abandon his country to destruction. But if you proceed to violent measures with us, King Numan will hear of

it; he will march against you with troops and armies, and will make you food for the birds and beasts. As soon as Antar heard this he changed his resolution; And when did Aswad set out on his expedition? asked he. About five days before our departure, said Mooferridj, and doubtless now he is in your country. At hearing this the light became dark in his eyes. Alas! then the tribe of Abs is disgraced among the Arabs, he cried: I must and will root out every vestige of that King Numan. I have not forgotten King Zoheir's kindnesses, said he to Oorwah, and I must expose my existence for his sake, for I bear him no grudge. O Champion of the Absians, said Basharah, by the faith of an Arab, with respect to Prince Cais and his brothers, and their father King Zoheir, you are considered as much as his eldest son Shas; but no one estranged his heart against you but Amarah, and that ordure-born Rebia. May God curse your father and mother, said Amarah, how often do you talk to him of us, and make him think of us? Let him alone; let his intoxication pass off, and may his person and the sight of him ever be absent from us! Hey! O Amarah, said Antar, he who wishes to be Ibla's husband should not be a coward like you, and one that fears death and affliction. Who is he, exclaimed Amarah, that wishes for Ibla, or to hear her mentioned? and he who has heard of her would stop his hearing for ever. Now, said Antar, that would not be right; but when I have returned with

that Aswad a prisoner, and have released King Zoheir and his sons from infamy and ignominy, I will requite ye all according to your deserts, and I will slay you all, high and low: and thus saying he quitted them. O comrades, cried Sinan, this black slave must be perfectly frantic, his senses must be disordered, to march from hence and meet with one hundred horsemen Prince Aswad with ten thousand warriors, all armed with spears! I never in my life, said Mooferridj, saw a more fortunate fellow than this black slave, nor a more expert spearsman. By the faith of an Arab, said Amarah, should Antar meet Prince Aswad he will ride him the ride of a lion. Were his armies as numerous as the sands and the locusts, he will most assuredly bring him here pinioned.

But Antar, when he returned home, assembled the chiefs, and informed them of Aswad's expedition; and I am resolved to go to King Zoheir's assistance, he added. O my son, said his father, we are here but two hundred and fifty men, and shall one like King Numan be our foe and antagonist! How can we proceed against ten thousand horsemen, and abandon our wives and families? As to our women, said Antar, there is no alarm about them; no one will venture to approach this spot before the fugitives of the Shibanians reach King Numan, and inform him of what has happened to them; he must then address the Arabs by letter, and we shall return hither before all that can have taken place. But I

have not come to this place, or rebelled against King Numan, but on having formed a proper estimate of mankind. I do not fear even the monarch of Persia, the lord of the balcony; therefore, how shall I fear ten thousand horse, or even a hundred thousand of the bravest? And he sent for Shiboob and said, Son of my mother, how many roads are there hence to our country? There are three, replied Shiboob. Where do they meet? said Antar. By the waters of the tribe of Akhrem and the great lake. Upon that he selected a hundred and fifty of the noblest Absians, and left one hundred to protect the property and the families, and recommending his uncle Málik and his son Amroo to take care of the prisoners, and to be on the alert night and day, he set out over the plains and deserts, Shiboob preceding him showing the way. Antar had his heart full of King Zoheir and the Absians, and as the journey lengthened, he thus expressed himself:

"He who is ambitious of honour bears no malice,
"and no exalted sentiments can exist in the mind
"of the passionate. He who is a slave of a tribe
"must not contradict them; he must endeavour to
"soothe them and conciliate them when they are
"angry. Formerly indeed I tended their camels,
"but now I protect them when they are in affliction.
"God has ennobled the tribe of Abs, and has en-
"dowed them with virtues the Arabs possess not in
"their nature. Their slave has left the warriors
"overthrown in the dust, all in consternation and

" in disgrace. Were I not to rescue them in
" their adversities, I myself should not be safe, and
" misfortune would not always fail me. If you
" think, O Numan, my arm cannot reach you, for-
" tune then has changed. There are serpents, and
" their touch is soft in moving them round, but in
" their fangs is death. To-day, O Numan, you
" shall know what a youth will trample down thy
" brother whom falsehood has encouraged. A youth
" that plunges into the dust of battle with smiles,
" and when he retires his spear's point is dyed with
" blood. If he draws the sword to enforce his
" blows, the atmosphere is illumined, and the clouds
" are rent asunder. The steeds are witness for me
" how I dive among them, and that my thrusts are
" like the sparks of a blazing fire. May God never
" remove from my eyes the noble youths; warriors
" when they alight, ennobled when they mount!
" Lions of the den, but no fangs have they but their
" barbs and the edge of their swords. Their fiery
" steeds rise with them, and round their necks are
" circles of buds like the basilflower. Ever will I
" encounter the chests of the chargers, fierce in look,
" with the spear, till their very saddles and housings
" cry out. He is blind within whose ken appears my
" form; he is deaf at whose mouth I raise my shout.
" The troops shall witness for me in the day of battle,
" the sword, and the spear, and the pens, and the
" records. My star shines far raised on high, above
" Arcturus, above the sun, above the clouds. I am

" the son of Shedad, through the sublimity of his " virtues, in glory, in honour, in liberality, and in " courtesy!"

When Antar had finished his verses the men and the chiefs were delighted. For four days they traversed the deserts and the sands, and their anxiety was excessive; and when they reached the great lake, O my brother, said Shiboob, lay in a provision of this water, for there is no more ahead of you. Now was I well assured that you were sufficiently strong to prevent Aswad from coming to this water, I would secrete you in this spot, for when he and his army come here they will be almost dead with thirst. O Ebe-reah, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab, if every human being on the face of the earth, long and wide as it is, were to come here, I will not let one of them wet his fingers in this water till the sword has cleaved my heart, and my sight be blinded. If so, said Shiboob, stay here, possess yourself of this spot, whilst I go and obtain some intelligence of this Aswad. And he set out traversing the barren waste; but Antar and his brave associates alighted at the head of the water, and concealed themselves in the mountains. The next day early, behold Shiboob appeared. Glorious morning! cried Antar, come, tell me what is your news. O Ebe-reah! My brother, said Shiboob, I have seen Prince Aswad and his armies, like the rolling sea, and King Zoheir, and his sons, and the Absians all in captivity, for Aswad surprised them in

the morning. They fought for three days, and on the fourth day came the tribe of Fazarah, and with them the tribe of Marah, and the armies attacked them in all directions; so they plundered the dwellings and property, and made the women and families captives. Aswad is now returning on his way to his brother King Numan, overjoyed at what has happened. I heard all this from your friend Prince Malik, for when I separated from you I did not stop in my journey over the wastes till I met the armies, and mingled with them in the dead of the night, when I heard Prince Malik thus complaining:

"We have drunk of fears after our security; we "have been thoughtless of the adversities of fortune; "we have tasted of ignominy now that the raiser of "the dust of the tumultuous contest has disap- "peared from us. In his absence we have been "destroyed by the oppressor, and the horses of the "rebellious with slackened reins have trampled "over us. Our families were protected by his long "spear, but its point is now broken. O hero of the "tribe of Carad, assist us with the edge of thy "sword from the rage of the Yemenites. Let not "the accursed tribe exult over us. Our wives have "been taken captives like harlots. Thou art our "refuge at all times when the horses of death trou- "ble us. Thou hast familiarized us to glory and "honour, do not break us down, for thou wert the "builder. Our wives and our virgins are driven

" away, and they beckon to thy noble person with
" their fingers. Tears flow from every brilliant eye
" over the cheeks, blushing like the judas tree.
" They cry out in their sorrows, O by Abs, O as-
" sist us, (sufficient are the pains we now suffer,)
" against our foes that have driven us into the
" desert, and let the birds of Yemen mourn over
" them."

Shiboob repeated these verses in the language of Prince Malik, and whilst Antar shed tears at the recital, Shiboob continued, O my brother, as soon as I had heard these verses, I advanced towards the Prince, and saluted him. He related to me all that had happened. I consoled his heart, and soon after I drew out my dagger, and I cut in pieces all the water-bags belonging to Prince Aswad, and now they will find no water before them but in this place, and in three days they will reach you.

At hearing the words of Shiboob, Antar's cares and sorrows dissolved. Thou hast done admirably well, O Ebe-reah, said he; and Antar felt assured of the discomfiture of the Prince's army. He then commanded his warriors to conceal themselves among the mountains and the sand-hills, and Shiboob stationed himself as their scout, gazing over the desert to the right and left. But as to Aswad, he marched on, the remainder of the night, till early next day, when he demanded of one of his slaves some water after he had eaten his meal. The slaves stared at each other; they turned pale, and looked to-

wards the ground. What is the matter with ye? said the Prince; and what has happened to you? O Prince, they replied, as soon as morning dawned, we saw all our water-bags and sacks were rent open. On hearing this, the light became darkness in the eyes of the Prince. And who has done this deed? cried he. We know not, most dreaded sire, said they. He immediately ordered his messengers to proceed to the great lake and bring water. They obeyed his directions, and the messengers set out with the water-bags and sacks, forming one hundred brave fellows; and the army continued their march that day and night, and the next day, but as there was no news of the messengers, the Prince and his chiefs marched forward in quest of them, and to procure some water.

As we before mentioned, Antar had stationed Shiboob to look out; so when the messengers advanced, he informed Antar of it. They attempted to fill their bags, and turned towards the water. In an instant sixty were made prisoners, and forty were slain. The messengers and their bags were seized, and to Antar's question about the Prince and his army, they said, They will be with you this day; we quitted them in the most dreadful suspense, and if they wait for us to return with water for them, the whole army must expire of thirst.

O my brother, said Shiboob, give me fifty horsemen of Oorwah's, and I will fill these bags and return to the army, and will supply with drink all the

Absians, and will release them from captivity and bondage; for know that Aswad's troops will not be in a state even to look at one another. Do as you please, son of my mother, said Antar: and immediately Shiboob took away the water-bags and sacks, and selecting fifty horsemen, he departed, passing over roads the accursed devil himself would never have discovered, till mixing with them, he perceived brother knew not his brother, neither a son his father.

The Prince in the mean time had set out in quest of water, and a large portion of his troops had followed him, all most anxiously seized with the desire of drinking. They advanced towards the vicinity of the lake, where they saw their messengers all slain. He was confounded, and whilst they were in this state of horror, Antar assaulted him, and shouted, and terrified him. He smote him with Dhami a blow on the joints of his neck, and he hurled him at his full length on the ground. He dismounted to pinion him, and having bound him fast by the arms, he made towards his army that was dotted about the desert in tens and twenties. Antar and his party appeared against them: all that surrendered he made prisoners, but those that defended themselves he left dead, whilst they cried out to him, O son of Shedad, only give us some water, and take us prisoners.

Antar listened to none of their speeches, neither did he make any answer, even till the remainder of

the army arrived—the whole twenty thousand hustling in crowds towards the water. Antar raved even like a furious camel; he dashed down the warriors; when lo! a troop of horse appeared, amounting to three thousand, all crying out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! and at their head was King Zoheir and his brave sons. Shiboob had effected their escape; for when he departed with the water-bags, filled with water, he continued his journey till he reached the Absian prisoners. Seeing the army each interested in his personal wants, he penetrated through them, and supplied the Absians with water, and ordered Oorwah's people to release them. In an hour all were at liberty, and took their horses as they were by their sides. They carried off armour and accoutrements, and corslets, and in less than an hour they were mounted, and became illustrious horsemen. Join my brother Antar at the great lake, cried Shiboob.

Upon this King Zoheir cried out to his people, Come on, my cousins, to the assistance of the man who has raised us from the dead, and has protected our wives and our daughters. He galloped on, and the Absian warriors followed him till they came up with Antar, and they all in one voice shouted O by Abs! O by Adnan! and they made a general attack on the army.

Antar was rejoiced at seeing the Absians at liberty, and he rushed amongst the enemy. King Zoheir

and his associates performed deeds that would have amazed the bravest of warriors. Thus they continued till the day fled, and the army of the Prince was entirely routed, and dispersed over the desert and waste, Antar and the Absians pursuing them till they drove them out of that country, and then returning to the scattered horses and dispersed plunder, they took possession of the tents, and baggage, and cattle. Aswad was their prisoner, with seven thousand of the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam; more than four thousand were slain, the remainder escaped by flight. But Antar turned towards King Zoheir, and he appeared as if plunged in a sea of blood. The King dismounted, and ran towards him, and folding him to his bosom, kissed him between the eyes, thanking him, and extolling him. The same did all King Zoheir's sons; they advanced and saluted Antar, and thanked him for what he had done; whilst the Absians prayed for him, and lauded his deeds. They reposed that night; but the next day they set out for the mountains of Radm, and the valley of Raml.

They continued their march night and day till they reached the mountain, and they found it totally unoccupied. Antar shuddered, and was amazed. Shiboob gazed, and he saw Basharah hung upon the top of the mountain. Shiboob wept bitterly; Antar grieved for Ibla, and his tears streamed in torrents.

BRANCH OF THE 83

CHAPTER XIX.

When Antar departed in quest of Prince Aswad, he deputed his uncle Malik and his son, and a party of Oorwah's people, to take charge of the prisoners, and to protect the place. But as soon as he was gone, Amroo entered unto the prisoners, and began to abuse them, demanding restitution of the property they had taken from Ibla. Alas, O Amroo! said Rebia, art thou not ashamed of this discourse, and art not thou, as well as thy father, utterly disgraced by following this cursed and perfidious slave? Thinkest thou, O Amroo, that Antar can resist the Arab and the Persian, when King Numan shall send for him? What will ye do then? And moreover, O Amroo, how canst thou reconcile it to thy heart to marry thy sister to one, who used to tend her camels and her flocks? Rejoice then in the certainty that Antar will never return; for he is gone to fight with twenty thousand horsemen. My opinion is, thou shouldst persuade thy father to avail himself of this opportunity before he repents.

These words entered deep into Amroo's ears; Rebia's wily ways had their effect; and he felt

ashamed on the subject of his sister. But how can we manage to escape? said he. My advice is, said Rebia, that you refer your business to this noble hero Mooferridj, he will take you with him to King Numan, and will secure his protection for you, and when we arrive at Hirah, and shall see Prince Aswad on his return, with King Zoheir, a prisoner, and all the tribe of Abs, we will mediate for King Zoheir, and will marry his daughter to King Numan, and marry Ibla to this valiant Chief Amarah; then we will return all together home to our families and friends. God bless you for this contrivance! said Amarah.

As soon as Amroo heard this, he was convinced. So he quitted the prisoners, and repaired to his father Malik, and related all that Rebia had mentioned. All this is perfectly correct, said his father, but I fear the good fortune of Antar: for we have never attempted to oppose him, but we have fallen into most grievous calamities; but have patience with me till I have decided on the plan. They waited till night came on with its obscurity. Arise, said Malik to his son, seek the prisoners, that is, release them.

Amroo instantly arose, and went to the prisoners, and unbound them, and informed them of what his father had planned. He delivered to them their arms and accoutrements, and their horses; and as we have said, they were the tyrants of war-

riors. So when they gained possession of their arms and armour, each sprang forth a lion. They assaulted the mountain; they seized the men, and bound them fast by the shoulders. They made the women and families captive, and plundered the stores and cattle; and by morning they were masters of every thing. But the first thing Mooferridj and Rebia did was to hang Basharah on the mountain top. They set their wives at liberty, and bound the women of the family of Carad, and Ibla was treated in the most ignominious manner, in contempt towards Antar. They drove away the cattle, and issued from the monntains, seeking the land of King Numan.

Amarah was in ecstacy, and kept trotting round the howdah in which was Ibla, brandishing his spear in his left hand. They continued their journey that day and night, but on the next day, soon after sunrise, there arose a dust: they halted, it cleared away, and there appeared five thousand horse, preceded by a knight, like a huge fragment of a mountain, or one of the remnants of the tribe of Aad. His feet drew deep lines over the land, such was the length of his body.

As soon as Mooferridj saw him, Fly, my cousins, fly, he cried; this is the Chief Maadi Kereb, and he wheeled round and fled, Sinan and Rebia following him. How can we fly, exclaimed Amarah, and abandon Ibla, and not fight a little at any rate,

that she may view the intrepid conduct of the fierce Amarah? O thou defiled mustachioed fool! follow me, and give us none of your bark-husks*, cried Rebia. Upon this, he threw away his spear and fled.

When Zalim saw what the family of Zeead had done, May God disgrace you among men, he cried; you that cannot protect your women, or repulse an enemy or foe. Then he also took to flight, and escaped.

This warrior that met them was a sturdy hero, and an undaunted lion, one of the thousand tyrants; his stature equalled the tallest trees, when he stood still and when he moved; in his hand he bore a thundering spear, and he was the dread of all warriors.

When Antar had taken Jayda captive, and had slain her cousin Khalid, Jayda obtained her liberty and fled, and in grief at what had befallen her, she clothed herself in black, and wept and mourned incessantly. And Maadi Kereb, when drinking, found his pleasures so disturbed by her lamentations and plaints, that he resolved on an expedition, when lo! a messenger came towards him, and saluting him, informed him of all Antar had done, and that he was gone down to the mountains of Radm, and that King Numan had sent twenty thousand horsemen against him.

* i. e. Nonsense.

When Maadi Kereb heard this, he was delighted; he sent for Jayda. Be comforted in the death of Antar, as a compensation for your cousin, said he. Let us, cried Jayda, undertake the destruction of this perfidious slave, and let us avenge ourselves.

On hearing this, Maadi Kereb ordered the tribes of Morad and Zebeed to prepare their warlike weapons. He selected five thousand horsemen, and resolved on departing. Jayda too was overjoyed at this expedition to engage Antar, for she was filled with the notion that she should kill him, and take vengeance for the loss of her cousin Khalid; and when they were at some distance from the tribe of Zebeed, Jayda thus expressed herself:

"My life is wasting, but my grief passes not "away. My courage is diminished, and my soul is "exhausted. My tears flow abundantly, and my "eyelids are ulcered; any sleep, now Khalid is "gone, is my oppression. Alas! alas! O my re-"grets for him who defended us with his Indian "blade! But a slave of the tribe of Carad has af-"flicted us; whose arm is fate and approaching "death. Were there not such vicissitudes of "fortune, honours would not be granted to the "base-born slaves. O sons of my uncle! rouse the "dust of battle against the country of Abs and its "regions. Drive away all their virgins with the "point of the spear, to their infamy and disgrace.

" My fury can never be appeased without the " piercing spear that raises the dust of conten- " tion, or the blow from the sharp-edged scimitar, " that makes the bravest gnaw their fingers with " rage."

When Jayda had finished her verses, pride burst like a hurricane through the heads of her warriors, and they continued their course till they met Mooferridj, and all his people fled.

When Maadi Kereb marked Mooferridj and his flight, See these wretches, daughter of my uncle! he cried to Jayda, when the wolf snuffs the smell of a lion, he flies and runs in terror away. But as soon as he saw Malik, Ibla's father, he recognised him, and also his son Amroo, and the whole body of Caradians. Know, said he to Jayda, these are our enemies, and Malik, son of Carad, who sent Antar to our country to slay your cousin. Thou old wretch, thou perfidious dog, bellowed he at Malik, we have heard the tribe of Shiban were your captives; how is it we see you with them in captivity and bondage? And truly they have carried off your property and families, and this is indeed a most curious affair. O warrior, said Malik, all you have heard is true, and we are ourselves the cause of this calamity; for we have abandoned truth, and have followed fraud and deceit; and we have been betrayed by those in whom we confided. He then informed him all about Antar, and how he had delivered the pri-

soners over to them, and was gone to meet Prince Aswad, and we, he continued, have set them at liberty, and this fatality is now come upon us. Maadi Kereb was amazed at this recital. You have indeed rewarded Antar most infamously, said he; but you know that it is Antar who has made you the common talk among the Arabs; and truly you have acted in the basest manner. And he fell upon him and his son Amroo with a whip he had in his hand, till he made their blood stream upon the ground from the violence of his blows.

After this, Maadi Kereb and Jayda, with their troops, returned, seeking their own country, taking with them the property of the family of Carad, their women and children. Ibla wept night and day for her cousin, the magnanimous conqueror Antar. But Jayda had ever in her mind the words of Malik to Antar, viz.—I will not marry my daughter to you, till you bring me Jayda to hold the bridle of her camel on the marriage night. So she went aside to him and his son, and beat them violently, till their blood trickled upon the earth, and they were nearly lifeless from excessive torture. Thus they indeed repented of their behaviour to Antar. But as to the Shibanians that fled from Antar when he took their Chief Mooferridj prisoner, they continued their hasty course till they came to King Numan, and related what Antar had done to them. On hearing this, the light became dark-

ness in the eyes of Numan, and he was amazed at Antar's good fortune. Well, said he to his attendants, entertain them till Prince Aswad arrives with his prisoner King Zoheir, and the whole Absian tribe; and then I will send all my armies and troops against Antar, and will order them to bring him to my presence, that I may inflict on him the severest torments, and feed the dogs on his flesh.

He remained quiet for seven days, when the Chief Mooferridj arrived, together with Rebia, and the warriors, and there was not one but wept and shed torrents of tears in detailing his condition and his adventures, and when King Numan heard the occasion of this disaster, wrath was kindled in his countenance — he made them repeat their story. And Antar has proceeded against your brother the Prince, they added, with one hundred and fifty horsemen. Verily, exclaimed King Numan, this circumstance deserves to be recorded and inscribed, particularly if Antar should rout my brother and his army; then indeed there will be no resource but for me to deliver up the kingdom of the Arabs to Antar, and put myself to no further trouble about it.

King Numan waited patiently in expectation of his brother's arrival, his heart all the time enduring unknown tortures. In a few days the army that fled from the great lake arrived, all cut to pieces—

wandering over the wilds—not one daring to look behind him—each ignorant of the fate of his companions—till they presented themselves before King Numan, all exclaiming, What terrors! what dreadful events! King Numan, on seeing them in this condition, felt his heart on fire, and his distraction was insupportable. What! has Antar vanquished you? he cried. Yes, they exclaimed; he has rooted out every vestige of us, and has not left of us even one to fight, nor a banner to wave.

Yet he would not have succeeded in his attempts but by thirst and drought, they added; for he met us at the great lake. He took your brother prisoner, with seven thousand of his horsemen, of the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam, and four thousand were slain in the dust; the remainder fled over the wilds; and this is our fate. As to those four thousand, exclaimed Numan, who have been killed, how shall we be revenged on that sturdy slave, and how shall we take his blood, in compensation for the chieftains of Lakhm and Juzam? For truly, if this news reaches Chosroe, we shall be no longer considered or respected by him. I am quite distracted, and know not how to extricate myself from these difficulties.

O King, said Rebia, write to the Arabs who are under your dominion, and I will also write to the tribe of Fazarah. We will all go against Antar, and tear up every vestige of him. Thou Sheikh of

iniquity, exclaimed Numan, turning upon him; by the faith of an Arab, thou hast indeed opened an unfortunate door with these Arab dogs, and thou for this disturbance deservest nought but to have your chin shaved, and the cruelest tortures, thou ordure of Arabs and men! But Numan ordered letters to be written to all the Arab tribes, both near and distant, requiring them to repair to him with all speed, and the Vizier Amroo, son of Nefilah, wrote accordingly to the Arabs, and amongst others to Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian, ordering him to come with his troops, and he also was directed to release the Shibanian women, and to restore to Mooferridj the property he had captured, and to take care of Ibla, and the family of Carad he had with him, until the differences with Antar should be arranged; and we, it was said in conclusion, will give you half the spoil, when Antar is dead.

As soon as this letter reached Maadi Kereb, he was greatly astonished. What extraordinary times, what wonderful events are these! he exclaimed. This slave must be endued with the most admirable qualities; and the proof is, that he has taken Prince Aswad prisoner; and truly by this his name will be recorded for ages: in fact, at first it was a disgrace and a dishonour to fight with Antar, but now it will be a glory and a boast, now that he has vanquished kings, and overcome the bravest. But I am anxious

to outstrip the armies of King Numan, and succeed in putting this black wittol to death. He inquired intelligence of the messengers about Antar, and they informed him that he was gone down to the mountains of Radm.

On hearing this, he sent for Jayda, and related to her Antar's adventures; and now, he added, Numan has ordered me to attack him, and to restore Mooferridj's property. And what have you resolved on doing? asked Jayda. As to his orders, replied Maadi Kereb, about the restitution of Mooferridj's property, I must obey; but as to his directions about my repairing to him, that I will not do; but I will collect my troops, and will go against Antar myself. I will not trouble King Numan, but will accomplish his wishes, and I will not proceed to King Numan, but with all the tribe of Abs driven ahead of me, with ropes round their necks, and Antar's head raised high on one of my longest spears. And who, said Jayda, must go with Mooferridj's property? You; said Maadi Kereb. But then, said she, I must have with me the family of Carad, and their property, that I may not be slack in torturing that Malik, and his son Amroo.

Jayda remained that night, but the next day she mounted her steed, and taking away with her Mooferridj's property, the family of Carad, and their goods, she set out on her way to Irak. Maadi

Kereb, too, mounted with five thousand stout Zebeedians, and went to engage Antar. He marched at the head of his warriors like a strong tower, thus reciting:

"The lions of the desert are my delight and "my companions; they see in me their fellow and "ally. Behold, the dwellings of the family of Ca- "rad are near their final doom. In the combat I "have overwhelmed their horsemen on account of "their slave, surnamed the accursed. I will de- "stroy their chiefs with the thrust of the spear "through their bowels and their waists. You shall "be satiated with their blood, after ye have eaten "your fill, ye wild beasts—so thank me—I am "Maadi Kereb, the chief of the Zebeedians, and "every Arab horseman is my inferior. Every "warrior humbles himself before me, struck with "fear when I brandish my sword in my hand. "Mine is the universe, and every slave therein in "the castles and the fortresses. My force is the "force of the lion; they fear my power, and ap- "proach me not. I heed them not. I care not "for them when they oppose me; and were it not "a heinous sin, I would say to the whole earth, "my right hand and my left hand should sub- "vert it."

These verses proceeded from that extreme ignorance of the Arabs, for when any one of them mounted a horse, he used to say, the earth tottered

in affright at him, and that all the bravest warriors were within his grasp, and thus Maadi Kereb sought the mountains. But as to Antar, when he returned to the mountains, and saw that whole country destroyed, and Basharah hung up and the birds feeding on him, he was as no one had ever been before him, such was his distress at the loss of Ibla; yet he concealed his grief, and in appearance was patient and resigned. O my brother, said Shiboob, by the faith of an Arab, no one but your uncle Malik and his son Amroo have released the prisoners; indeed I was never comfortable at leaving them behind us in the mountains, for treachery is their nature, and iniquity can never be extracted from their hearts; but their perfidy will certainly fall upon them.

Antar and the Absians alighted in the mountains; they pitched their tents, and raised their standards, and crammed the caverns full with the prisoners; and whilst Shiboob and a party of slaves were stationed guard over them, Antar remained quiet; but in his heart was the flame of anxiety to learn some intelligence, and though in company with King Zoheir he evinced the most perfect courage and forbearance, yet when alone he thought only of Ibla; his grief then became extreme; he wept immoderately, and thus spoke:

" Who is it by whom the lands of the valley of

" Raml are laid waste? Where are his traces, O
" northern blasts? Here I stand, and my tears
" flood my eyes at the inutility of my demand.
" Should I ask of the damsels of Carad and of her
" companions for that beauty, how deceitful would
" be the reply! how irrelevant to my question! At
" the voice of the raven I am melancholy, and my
" tears flow like pearls. O raven, wherefore dost
" thou call all the day long on my right hand and
" on my left? thou communicatest to me every
" species of grief, and tellest of separation after en-
" joyment, as if I had sacrificed thy young with the
" edge of my sword, and had laid snares for thee.
" By the virtue of thy parent, rather soothe the
" wounds of my heart, and quench the flame of my
" soul with thy song. Speak to me of my Ibla, tell
" me where she is, and what the hands of darkness
" are doing to her. My heart roams distracted over
" the earth, marking the traces of her camel's foot-
" steps. My body is cast among the mountains of
" Radm, and my imagination is haunted with
" phantoms. In the valley the bird flits on the
" branches, and its complaints are in the extreme of
" bitterness. I say to it whilst it continues its sor-
" rows, complain no more; is thy condition like
" mine? As for me, my tears flow, and thou
" mournest also, but without tears; and that is the
" just explanation of my state. May God execrate
" separation and respect it not; how oft has my

" heart been shivered with its arrows! I have en-
" gaged every hardy obstinate warrior, but absence
" kills me without a contest. I am truly called the
" Antar of horsemen, and the animated leader in
" every affair of importance and peril!"

Antar indulged in incessant grief and lamentation morning and evening till the arrival of his brother Jareer; his coming was indeed like a festival, for he informed him of all that had happened; and Maadi Kereb, he added, is marching against you with five thousand warriors, all immersed in steel and refulgent armour. Jareer had been taken prisoner with Ibla, and was unable to effect his escape till Jayda set out to go to King Numan. Jayda indeed did not know him, or that he was Antar's brother, or she would have treated him ill; for among the Arabs it was not generally understood that Antar had any brother but Shiboob.

Antar conducted him to King Zoheir, to whom he related all he had heard. O Aboolfawaris, said he, as to this knight that is coming against us, all the warriors are unanimous in their opinion that he is a tyrant fire even cannot overcome; and now what are your intentions, and what is your advice? None but to meet this Maadi Kereb, exclaimed Antar, and all his host. Afterwards I will engage King Numan, and will extirpate all the Arabs he has assembled round him. I will raise thee to his station: then will I go to Moodayin, and will put Chosroes Nushirvan to death. I will exterminate all the armies of Persia,

and will not leave one of them to wag a leg; then will I become lord of the balcony, and will rule over the Persian and the Arab, for I know when death is protracted, the sharpest scimitar cannot avail, and man can effect what he pleases and desires, were he even the most contemptible of slaves. When King Zoheir heard Antar's discourse he was amazed at his intrepidity, and the little account he made of the Arabs. Do as you please, he said, for we will be guided by your actions. If you engage, we will engage; if you fight, we will fight; if you die, we will die. Yours is our property, and yours is all we possess. Console your heart and brighten up your eye, said Antar, for by the faith of an Arab, I must absolutely put you in possession of King Numan's station, had he even with him men and demons, and the fiends that rebelled against our Lord Soliman. I will strike off the head of my uncle Malik and his son Amroo. Thus saying, he started out of King Zoheir's presence, and every night he kept the watch, but on the third night the Absians searched for Antar, but could not find him. King Zoheir was greatly agitated, and he said, Antar is surely gone to encounter Maadi Kereb and the tribe of Zebeed; never will he let them reach this desert.

As to Maadi Kereb, he marched on till he came into the vicinity of the mountains, when he halted at one of the lakes, where assembling his people about him, O my cousins, said he, I am sure when

Antar hears of our expedition, he will either not dare to appear without the mountains, or he will intercept our road, or he will run away when he hears of us, and will not venture to establish himself in this country. But I am desirous of executing a plan, which is this: I will take with me ten warriors, and will set out and surprise the defile at day-break before they have any information of us. I will ply the sword well among them, and will allay my heart with them till you come up and facilitate the business for us, and make the affair easy. We shall gain a great reputation by this enterprise, for a well-contrived plan is more creditable than engaging in a battle. Do as you please, they said. He reposed till the greater part of the night was passed; he then mounted his horse, and took with him ten horsemen, whose firmness in the most imminent perils he well knew, and he set out for the mountains. He travelled on till day-break, when he heard something ahead of him, and saw a man on foot skulking before them. Go, said Maadi Kereb to one of his horsemen, and bring me news of this fellow on foot. But he observed them as soon as they observed him. Hey! young man, cried the Zebeedian, who art thou? whence comest thou? and whither art thou going? I am a Zebeedian, said the man on foot, and my master Maadi Kereb has sent me to obtain intelligence of Antar. Thou liest, said the Zebeedian, thou ordure-born wretch, we are the tribe of Zebeed marching to en-

gage Antar, and no human being has been sent before us. And he fixed his spear in his hand, and was about to drive him into Maadi Kereb's presence, but the man on foot had already drawn out an arrow from his quiver, and fixed it on the handle of his bow, and shot the Zebeedian with it on the chest, and the arrow pierced him quivering through his back; he gave a scream, and fell dead. My cousins, cried out Maadi Kereb, this fellow on foot has slain our cousin; come on, on to him: and the nine crowded after him, and shouted out, and sought him in all directions. But when the man on foot saw the troop in quest of him, he fled out of their sight in less than the twinkling of an eye, and they could perceive no trace of him. The Zebeedians were amazed at his agility: This can be no human being, said they. He had not disappeared long when he returned, and with him a knight on a black steed. Ye ignoble dastards, he cried, I am Antar, son of Shedad, the vanquisher of heroes.

Now Antar, after what had occurred in the presence of King Zoheir, kept watch; but on the third night, said Antar to Shiboob, Let us, son of my mother, go to some distance from the mountains; perhaps we may come upon Maadi Kereb, and I will show him what will surprise him, for the king has been crying up his intrepidity. Do what you please, said Shiboob. So they marched on till they met Maadi Kereb and his party. Shiboob slew the horseman, and returned to acquaint his brother with

what had passed. Antar was delighted, and congratulated himself, and assaulted the Zebeed heroes; he slew five of them, and Shiboob three with his arrows, and only one escaped, no more, who returned to Maadi Kereb, and told him what Antar had done to his comrades. When Maadi Kereb heard this, the light became dark in his eyes, and without saying a word he rushed upon Antar like a furious lion. Antar also received him as the parched up ground the first of the rain, and descended upon him like the descent of fate and destiny. They engaged till the very tears gushed from their eyes, and darkness involved them in shades of night. Thrusts fell at random, and the blood flowed from their bodies upon the surface of the earth. It was a moment the horrors of which turned youth to age. They continued the fight and the conflict till the morning rose upon them, and in their hands only remained the stumps of their spears. They threw them away, and unsheathed their scimitars, more ready instruments of death; they smote each other with their swords against their shields till the whole country was illumined by their flashes. The sweat streamed from their bodies, and both wished they had never been born; they rushed at each other with the fury of lions, so that their feet ground down even the stones and the rocks. Shiboob was also occupied with the horseman who had escaped out of the ten; neither did he discontinue his wiles and tricks till he had slain

his horse, and he became a man on foot like himself. It was then he attacked him with his arrows, but could make no impression on him on account of the steel and coat of mail he had on him. The conflict continued between Antar and Maadi Kereb like a sparkling fire till Maadi Kereb was fatigued and exhausted, and disgrace followed glory; for he observed in Antar something on which he had not calculated. So he was overwhelmed with shame and repentance, for he had not suspected that he should meet with such a reception from Antar, or be subject to such difficulties with him. They flung away their swords out of their hands, and slung their shields behind their shoulders; the two approached with their horses, and wrestled on their backs with their whole power and force till their horses sunk beneath them, and both fell to the ground. During this they both bellowed like the roar of lions, and their feet pounded the stones and the rocks whilst they wrestled and struggled, and the sweat poured down from their bodies like the froth of caldrons, and their feet stamped up furrows like graves. But Maadi Kereb was worn out and exhausted, and observing how Antar engaged, the tears started from his eyes from excess of rage. Antar roared at him in a voice like thunder in the clouds, and extending at him his arm like the neck of a black camel, he grasped him by the rings of his corslet and his coat of mail, and cried out, O by Abs, I will not be controlled,

I am the lover of Ibla; I will not be restrained! and he tore him up from the ground, took him prisoner, and dashing him again on the earth, bound fast his shoulders. But when the Zebeedian saw Maadi Kereb in Antar's power he attempted to escape by flight from the presence of Shiboob, but he overtook him like a blast of wind, and as he raised his hand with his dagger, the other begged for quarter, and delivered himself up to Shiboob, who pinioned his arms, and went with him to his brother Antar. As soon as he came before him, Hey! we are on a par in intrepidity this night, said he, for you have taken prisoner a knight and I also. By the truth of Him who distinguishes between morning and evening, no woman will ever bring forth another such man as Maadi Kereb, unless indeed it should be the express will and pleasure of the God of old, said Antar. By the faith of noble Arabs, who preserve inviolate their faith and protection, exclaimed Maadi Kereb, all skill fails when you are present in the field, and even the boldest is but a coward before you. At that period knights did justice to each other in their conversation, and no one amongst them forfeited the consideration of a hero.

Antar bound Maadi Kereb on the back of a horse as he said to Shiboob, Make fast also your prisoner, and return with me to the tribe that we may see how this business will terminate, for it is my wish to ransom Maadi Kereb for Ibla and all

our prisoners in the power of King Numan, otherwise I will strike off the head of his brother Prince Aswad, and all the prisoners of the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam; and I will release my own people with the edge of my sword, were they even on the back of the clouds. O Aboolfawaris, said Maadi Kereb, there is no occasion for these threats, for Ibla shall be at liberty, and so shall all the women, men and children with her, and their property, and there shall not be lost of all that belonged to you the value of a halter; and if you will but confide in my word, and release me from bondage, I will restore your family to you, and will intercede for a termination of this difference. Then will I take you as my master and friend for ever, and perhaps I shall be able to mediate between you and King Numan before he marches the Arabs against you, and a host numerous as the sands attack you; and should you then wish for a conference it will not be granted, for intrepidity avails not with numbers, and good counsel is preferable to exposure to dangers. But now you are apprised of the whole business, so consider your own safety. O Maadi, I am aware of all you have said, replied Antar; but know I have not undertaken this enterprise or opposed King Numan but in order to erase from me the name of servitude, and to attain high honours; and my mind assures me I shall subvert governments, and my name become celebrated among the mountains and the plains. It is only on this account I expose my

person to perils, and in this crisis I must seat myself in the very station of Chosroe Nushirvan, the lord of the tiara and the balcony. Maadi Kereb was amazed at the strength of his heart, and he was convinced he must be a most potent warrior and of no soft mould.

Antar had not advanced far when the Zebeedian army approached, that filled the whole surrounding region. Maadi Kereb told Antar what he had done, and that his tribe was advancing on no other account; but, said he to Shiboob, 'go you away with the prisoners, and let me attack this army alone, and let me destroy them with the force of my arm and my elbow. Shiboob proceeded with the prisoners; but Maadi Kereb shuddered, and was stupefied at Antar's expressions, seeing a single knight prepare to engage five thousand horsemen. Thou brave slave, he exclaimed, fire even cannot harm thee. The Zebeedians soon reached the field of battle; they saw the carcasses of their companions stretched on the ground, and knowing they were those who had accompanied Maadi Kereb, they cried out, Misery and ruin! They looked round to the right and left, searching out some one of whom to inquire who had done this deed: they saw no one but Antar stalking towards them, when one cried out, Come on, here is a knight, I will ask him; but if it is he that has acted thus to our comrades, cut him in pieces with your swords; and they crowded on till they came near to him. Hey, foul-born! they

cried, who has executed this deed on our companions? Where is our chief Maadi Kereb?

Antar's answer was that of a ferocious lion; he roared, and he bellowed, and shouted: Ye sons of harlots, as to your chief, I have taken him prisoner; and as to you, ye shall drink of disgrace and misery; and as to myself, I am Antar, son of Shedad, the destroyer of heroes. He had no sooner spoken than he rushed upon them; he pierced the first and hurled him over; the second he disgraced; a third he annihilated his existence; and so likewise with a fourth and a fifth; and in less than an hour the whole five thousand halted, and the foremost fell back upon the hindmost, shouting at him from a distance, not one of them venturing to come near the spot where he stood, for if they approached, he slew them instantly, and he killed above two hundred. The remainder were seized with panic and alarm, and when they saw the calamity that was falling upon them, they divided into five parties, and surrounding Antar on all sides, the men made at him with their spears and their swords, but Antar uncovered his head and assaulted them, raving like a furious camel; his eyeballs flashed fire, and the foam poured from the corners of his lips. He shouted forth: O by Abs! O by Adnan! By thine eyes, O Ibla, this day will I slay these horsemen. The Zebeedians were in the utmost consternation as they said to each other: Fly not, or ye will remain a foul disgrace among the Arabs; they hemmed him in,

and drew blood from his body; his horse Abjer was giving way, and there was not space for him to advance or retreat. Antar wanted to dismount, when lo! a dust arose, and discovered King Zoheir and five hundred Absian horsemen, preceded by Shiboob like a wolf, and when they came up they attacked and shouted, men met men, and heroes encountered heroes. Antar recovered his power. The cause of King Zoheir's arrival was this: being exceedingly distressed at the disappearance of Antar, he sent for Jareer and asked him, how long ago it was that he had quitted Maadi Kereb? My lord, he replied, I only left him behind two nights. Then, said King Zoheir, Antar is only gone with a view to finish their business, but it will be as well for us to join him and assist him: And I will go, said Oorwah, with my men to his aid; and I, said Shedad, I will accompany you, and thus said Zakhmetuljewad, and all the Carad horsemen. And I will also go myself, said King Zoheir, I will not be backward in aiding our protector Antar, the overwhelming knight. So he took in all five hundred horse as we mentioned, and followed the traces of Antar. About midday they met Shiboob, and with him Maadi Kereb and his associates, and their hearts were at ease, particularly when they saw his prisoners. They saluted him, and asked him what had happened to them. He related all that had passed about Maadi Kereb: Overtake my brother, he added, for he is in trouble; the Zebeedian troops

have attacked him alone, and he is now in the midst of an army of five thousand men.

Shiboob gave over Maadi Kereb and his companion to ten horsemen, and directed them to go with them to the mountains, and returned at the head of the horse like an antelope, till they came up with Antar, and attacked the tribe of Zebeed. By their assault, the horsemen were drawn off from Antar, and he rushed among the warriors. The Zebeedians, perceiving the destructive force of Antar and the Absians, turned away in flight, and departed in haste and confusion. In an hour a thousand of them were slain, and they said to each other, We, when Antar was even alone, could make no impression upon him; how can we succeed now that he has five hundred horsemen with him? and they wheeled about their horses' heads, and sought their own country. But Antar and the Absians pursued them till they drove them out of that land, and then returned to the scattered horses and dispersed armour, and having collected all the spoil, they set out for the mountains; Antar going ahead, as if he had been immersed in a sea of blood. When they reached the mountains, they assembled the women and families, and all were in high spirits at this event. They reposed that night, rejoicing in victory and triumph, and extolling Antar till daybreak; when Antar mounted and repaired to King Zoheir. As soon as he appeared, the king sprang on his legs and met him, and seating him in the

most honourable place, O Aboolfawaris, said he, you expose your person to great hazards, and I fear some dreadful accident will happen to you, and you will leave us to regret you for ages. O noble king, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab, verily all these events do not hasten death, and do not avert misfortune. King Zoheir was amazed at his words, (and it was on this account that all the Arab horsemen were so brave). Antar having ended his discourse, directed Shiboob to produce Maadi Kereb, and when he was in his presence: O Maadi Kereb, said he, write to Jayda and Numan, and demand your ransom of them. He agreed to the propriety of the proposal, and immediately wrote to Jayda, and thus expressed himself:

You, whom I acknowledge as the daughter of my uncle, know that fortune is treacherous, and the wise are not always secure from adversity, and he who says no one can slay me, errs in his speech. I indeed have acted like a fool, and was not aware of the vicissitudes of fortune. I have fallen into the power of the knight of Abs and Adnan. Then he explained in his letter all that happened with Antar: he recommended her to restore all the Carad women, adding, Treat Ibla kindly, and her father also, and make your excuses to them; do not detain any particle of their property; but be quick, be quick! before death arrives.

He despatched it by a Zebeedian horseman, and ordered him to return with all speed. But as to

Jayda, after she had separated from Maadi Kereb, she eagerly pursued her course, taking with her the women of Carad, and their property and children, till she arrived in the lank of Irak, where she saw the numerous assembled tribes. She presented herself to King Numan, and saluting him, delivered to him the women of the tribe of Carad and their property. Numan was much pleased, and to his inquiries about Maadi Kereb, she told him he was gone to meet Antar: By the faith of a noble Arab, said he, if Maadi Kereb effects this, and vanquishes the tribe of Abs and Antar, I will make him ruler over all the Arab tribes of the desert. Rebia looked at Ibla, and her father, and her brother, and observing how tortures had altered their condition, his heart grieved for them.

CHAPTER XX.

KING NUMAN stationed a guard over the family of Carad, vowing he would not hang Ibla, but by the side of Antar, and that he would not leave a single Absian alive. In the meantime he assembled his clans, amounting to forty thousand men. The last party that arrived were the tribe of Kendeh, commanded by Hidjar, son of Aamir, the Kendehan, a man of severe morose disposition and harsh manners, but whose name was celebrated for bravery, and general excellence in arms; for he was also one of the thousand tyrants in that age of ignorance. King Numan went out to meet him, and treated him and his companions with every mark of honour and respect. O king of the world, said Hidjar, why have you assembled all these armies? Who is he among the Arab kings that has rebelled against you? O chief Hidjar, replied Numan, no king has rebelled against us. But it is that slave Antar, that black robber, whom fortune has favoured to our prejudice, he has destroyed our armies, and defeated our horsemen; he has acquired glory—ay, and such glory! At hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of Hidjar. O king, he cried, who is this Antar, this camel-driver, that you should on his account assemble these armies

and warriors? For I myself, by the life of your head, am able to take that Antar prisoner with ten men on foot. I will bring him to you in a state of infamy, and also all the tribe of Abs bound with cords, and among the first shall be King Zoheir and his sons. We well know, said Numan, that you are able to do what you say, but all I desire of you is, to bring me Antar prisoner, that I may inflict on him the cruelest torments. Hidjar returned to his party, biting his hands in regret that he had not previously attacked Antar.

On that day arrived Maadi Kereb's requisition to Jayda, demanding of her his ransom in cattle; and as soon as she had read it, she instantly repaired to King Numan, and presented him the letter. He took it and read it; rage and indignation possessed him; he summoned his ministers, and consulted them about what he should do. But as they all remained silent, Numan addressed them (and their silence increased his passion), I must absolutely march against him with the whole force of Arabs now assembled, or never shall I succeed. "O dreaded king, said his vizier Amroo, son of Nefeela, I cannot approve of such a plan; for if you march against Antar with all these Arabs and Persians, perceiving himself thus reduced to a state of utter desolation, he will say to you, If thou dost not leave me quiet, I will cut off thy brother's head, and the heads of all those I have in my power: but, O noble king, ponder well this very important affair;

and purchase the blood of seven thousand of your countrymen with the blood of that worthless Antar. But what is your advice? said Numan. My advice, replied he, is that you should immediately release your prisoners; but if you vanquish him, treat him as you please. Send him an answer to this effect. I will exchange your uncle for Maadi Kereb; but if you wish to ransom Ibla and the other women, release my brother and his companions, or I will send you her head, and will slay all the families with her. And know, O King, were the whole universe in his power, and demanded for Ibla, he would set the whole at liberty. Numan, feeling convinced of the propriety of his vizier's advice, ordered him to write the letter to that effect. He gave it to one of his attendants, whom he honoured with standards and ensigns, appointing also an escort of twenty horsemen, and ordering him to proceed by the shortest road. When the Satrap approached the mountains, he attempted to enter the valley, but the slaves checked him: Stay where you are, son of a coward, said they, till we obtain permission for your further progress from Antar, son of Shedad. The Satrap stopped, and his heart trembled within him as he said to himself, Verily Antar is like Chosroe Nushirvan himself. On the representation of the slaves, Antar granted the Satrap permission to enter within the mountains; and desiring King Zoheir to sit down, he stood over his head, grasping his sword Dhami unsheathed in his hand, and deaths were

glaring from his eyes. As the Satrap entered, and beheld Antar, he shuddered and was stupefied, and in the excess of his terror, he kissed the ground in the presence of King Zoheir and Antar. He then presented the letter to King Zoheir, who took it and read it, and explained to Antar the threats and conditions it contained. But Antar's eyes glowed fiercely like burning coals; he roared at the Satrap in a voice that made the barren wastes shake to their very foundation. The Satrap trembled and shrunk back. Heh! thou bastard, exclaimed Antar, by the faith of noble Arabs, wert thou not in the presence of this awe-inspiring king, I would cut off thy head, and I would leave thee lifeless, my first victim; away! disgrace and infamy be on the mother of Numan and the mother of Chosroe Nushirvan. Dares Numan threaten one like me with his wild Arabs? Would he frighten me with his bombastical nonsense? By the faith of an Arab, were it not for the respect due to King Zoheir, I would make thee drink of the cup of death; as to his demand of his brother Prince Aswad, and the prisoners, and Maadi Kereb, I will release them all, that it may not be said that I fear them. But I will not release the captives, unless, together with my cousin Ibla, be delivered up Chosroe's tiara, and all the property that was taken from her by Rebia and Mooferridj; and let not the value of a halter be missing of Ibla's property. On hearing Antar's determination, the Satrap retired,

and mounting instantly, returned to King Numan, before whom he repeated what Antar had said. King Zoheir then, said Numan, made no reply. No, said the Satrap, by the life of your head, my lord, he dared not open his mouth in the presence of Antar, but seemed bridled and bitted. But what was it that produced in thee such fear and horror? asked Numan; O King, said he, you have never seen Antar, and have never seen his eyes like balls of burning coal. Take your own measures upon this point, said Numan to his vizier, send away the women of the Carad family with their property and their husbands. He also ordered Ibla's property to be taken out of the magazines, so that not an article was left to the value of a halter; he delivered up the whole.

Take your property, said the vizier Amroo to Malik, Ibla's father, and his son Amroo: Away to Antar your cousin. When Malik heard the vizier say your cousin, his rage became exceedingly great; and he turned towards Rebia, saying, O my cousin, let me remain a thousand years in prison, but let me not return again to behold the face of that bastard Antar: but, by the faith of an Arab, I must contrive his death; I must destroy him by my artifices and stratagems. Thus the chiefs of the Carad family marched away with their wives and children, and all their property, and the slaves proceeded ahead, driving on the cattle and the camels, till they reached the mountains, when they raised loud

shouts, and prayed for Antar the unconquerable knight. Antar and the chiefs of the tribe of Abs being apprised of their arrival, they went out to meet them, accompanied by King Zoheir and his sons, who were delighted at their safety and the restitution of their goods. Antar embraced his uncle Malik and his son Amroo, saying, No evil or calamity, my uncle, shall overtake your whilst your slave Antar exists. O my son, replied Malik, may you ever live to insure our prosperity, and to protect us from all disgrace! Malik told him what Jayda had done to him, and concluded by saying, O my nephew, your brother Jareer was the only cause of all our misfortunes; for he, in his wit, was cajoling Rebia till he released them from bondage; and we were not at all aware of our danger, till the party pounced on our heads, and twisted their cords round our arms, and had you not taken Maadi Kereb prisoner, never should we have been released. You are right, my uncle, said Antar, and I have reproved my brother for his behaviour. Antar returned to Ibla, and asked about her property: O my cousin, she replied, I have not lost even the value of a halter. By the life of thine eyes, exclaimed Antar, had Numan even detained the value of a single dirhem, I would have hung his brother Aswad, and have put to death the seven thousand prisoners. I would have pulled down Hirah on Numan's head, and would have slain every Arab he has assembled — I would have

marched to Modayin—I would have slain Chosroe, and made his balcony totter over his head.

Having now entered the mountains, Antar ordered Shiboob to set at liberty Prince Aswad and his people. Shiboob released them. But Antar cut off Maadi Kereb's hair with his own hand, saying, O Maadi Kereb, I have cut off your hair in revenge for Jayda's insults towards my cousin Ibla; and he ordered the slaves and attendants to turn out the prisoners bare-footed and naked, and bare-headed; and as they were executing Antar's commands, Art thou not ashamed, O son of Shedad, cried Aswad, to drive us away in this condition? We have not a horse to ride on! we have nothing to eat or drink! By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, reproach me not for my conduct towards any one of ye, for you are all going to assemble in a body against me, and you will return a second time to fight me, and the horses I should give you, verily I shall have to fight you for them; as to eatables, you will find on your way green weeds that you may graze on, and drink out of the puddles; but we at all events are a tribe entrenched within the mountains, and in the day of battle a small supply will feed us: ay, and most of ye say of me that Antar is a black slave and a bastard. These are the expressions you and others make use of towards me, and would do so were I to release you a thousand times: my best plan would be to kill ye all at once; thank God you are alive. Do not act thus,

O Aboolfawaris, said Aswad, for indeed I cannot walk on foot, no, not a quarter of a mile, so do give me something to carry me, or put me instantly to death, and deliver me from this ignominy. Hola! Ebe Reah, said Antar to Shiboob, bring here a she-camel, let him mount it and quit my presence, or I shall never be able to keep my sword off his neck. So Shiboob ran off, and with his usual ingenuity and sagacity, he chose out a she-camel, foundered and quite worn out—born lame and blind—weazy and broken-winded—grunting, loose-lipped, and toothless—crop-eared and spavined. When it was presented to the Prince, his soul was most indignant. Come, Prince, cried Shiboob, mount, whilst I hold the bridle, for I am terribly afraid it will fly away, for indeed it is one of that celebrated breed of Asafeer camels. May God curse the bowels that bore thee! cried the Prince; away with it, for I want it not; and he rushed out from the mountains blaspheming the fire. So they travelled in the most pitiable plight, feeding on the weeds of the earth, and drinking of the puddles, till they came nigh unto Hirah; and as the Arabs, whom King Numan had assembled, observed them, they eagerly ran towards them, inquiring what was the matter, so they related all that had happened to them with Antar. The news soon reached King Numan, who immediately hastened to meet his brother, and when he saw him in this plight, his gall was near bursting with rage and indignation.

He sent a noble steed for him, and mounting him on it, took him by his side, and questioned him about his adventures.

O King, cried out all the chiefs, lead us away to fight this Antar. Prepare then, said he, your warlike implements, let us depart. Who is this Antar, cried Hidjar, that you in person must march against him? Is there no one whom you can depute against Antar with one hundred men, to subdue his power and quench his iniquity? By the faith of an Arab, exclaimed King Numan, I myself will march against him; yet he, who shall do the deed in my presence, shall be distinguished and rewarded with the highest favours. This intelligence will soon reach Chosroe; he will hear of what Antar has done to me, and I fear he will think meanly of me, and will consign the dominion of the Arabs to some one else: but in three days have all your weapons of war ready. Whilst the warriors were preparing, said Hidjar to his people, Were I not afraid of rebelling against Numan, I would myself march to fight with Antar alone, and thus put a stop to all further trouble. Let us prepare and depart.

The above events were soon reported to Chosroe by the enemies of Numan, who, as soon as Antar first settled in the mountains of Radm, wrote to Chosroe to inform him that he had taken Prince Aswad prisoner and seven thousand men. Antar's

power, indeed, must have greatly augmented, cried Chosroe, thus to compass such deeds; he has forgotten what formerly happened to him when he was made captive by Monzar, and when he slew my Satrap Khosrewan. We accepted his excuses, and rewarded him with favours—we gave him a tiara and a turban—we sent him back to his tribe—and we thought he would be a firm friend of our government, but he has reverted to the foulness of his origin; he has even assaulted Numan, and the only remedy is at once to tear out his lips, and destroy all his race, or the vagabond Arabs will pretend to predatory incursions even upon us.

Chosroe waited patiently till he heard of the captivity of Maadi Kereb, and that Antar had released his women and families from the power of King Numan, and all the property of his cousin Ibla, and the precious jewels, in exchange for Prince Aswad, and the seven thousand men of the tribe of Lakhm. At this Chosroe's indignation was kindled, and he swore by the fire that he would slay Antar. He ordered his vizier Mubidan to levy twenty thousand men from Khorasan, and twenty thousand from Dilem, and he appointed to the command a Satrap named Wirdishan, and this Wirdishan was a proud haughty man, whom fire even could not subdue; and he gave the expedition in charge to him, because he could not confide in the Arab hordes, saying, Be you their leader; exert yourself nobly,

that our power may be respected. Wirdishan mounted, and over his head were raised the standards and dragons of Persia. He marched night and day till he came nigh unto Hirah, where he was greatly surprised at seeing the immense multitude assembled.

Now that was the very day fixed on for the march against Antar, and all the troops were ready to the number of seventy thousand. Numan went forth to meet the Persians, and saluted Wirdishan, saying, What has so agitated the heart of the just King, that he should put in motion one like you to engage the Arab hordes? Numan, said Wirdishan, accounts of your enfeebled state have frequently been made to him, and he has heard of what Antar has done to you; that he took your brother prisoner, and that you ransomed him with cattle. This has disturbed him, and he has sent me to you to remove this trouble from you. Verily he has lied, who has told this of me, exclaimed Numan; I have assembled these armies, and this is the day appointed for the march against him, and I will tear his life out from his sides. This is a proof of your weakness, said Wirdishan, for you are resolved on marching with seventy thousand men against only four thousand.

After a repose of two days at Hirah, he departed for the mountains of Radm, not mingling with Numan's troops, on the contrary, reviling and reproaching them.

Now Antar had despatched his brother Jareer to the land of Hirah. Return not, said he, till you have ascertained what King Numan is about. Jareer departed, habited as a slave, and reached Hirah, where he sojourned till the arrival of the Satrap Wirdishan; and when the armies set out, he made all haste back to the mountains, and came to his brother, to whom he related the intelligence concerning the march of the numerous host against him. My brother, said he, I never beheld a haughtier fellow than that Wirdishan; for he has no regard, no consideration for any one. But Antar on hearing this gave a roar that terrified him, saying, What a bother you make about all this, you bastard. By the faith of an Arab, I will not leave one of them to guide them in their flight, were they even as numerous as the sands in the valley of Cornelians!

And as he consulted with King Zoheir about what was to be done, Son of my uncle, replied Zoheir, we have no other resource but the stroke of the cleaving scimitars, and patience under the dark clouds of dust. We will fight in your presence with the drawn sword, till not one of us, not a living soul remains. We will defend our wives and families, till the horses sport with our skulls in the battle. O King, eminent in virtue, said Antar, affairs have almost arrived at that pass indeed. But do not you or your sons join to the fight till the enemy has hacked my body with their long spears. My

wish is to take with me one thousand warriors, and march against these advancing armies. I will not permit them to reach this spot, but after spear thrusts that shall make the stoutest quake. Son of my mother, said Shiboob, I also will go with you, but on condition that you attend to my counsel and my advice; for an affair conducted with skill is more efficacious than the boldest feats of arms.

Why should I not listen to your suggestions, said Antar, when I see they are judicious? so speak; what is your wish, O Ebe Reah? My advice, O my brother, said he, is, that you march as you have said, with one thousand horsemen. I will conduct you, and conceal you in the valley of Torrents, through which the hostile armies must pass; and where they will be greatly crowded. When they alight, do you rush out upon them, and shout at them, particularly if they should halt there in the night; for then indeed you will see wonders in the blood that will flow and stream, and then will necks be hacked off in the contest. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, your advice, Shiboob, is excellent, and the plan infallible. And immediately setting off with a thousand horsemen of the tribe of Carad, and Oorwah's men, he continued his march till he reached the valley, which not being far from the mountains of Radm, Antar anticipated the armies of Numan by half a day; and whilst he concealed his men in the ravines, Shiboob ascended the loftiest mountain, and stationed himself as their

look-out, casting his eyes to the south and to the north.

About mid-day there arose a dust that obscured the whole region. In an hour the dust opened, and discovered armies like the rolling waves in a tempest. Shiboob shouted to his brother Antar—Son of my mother, be on your guard: prepare for the conflict, for your enemies will arrive by evening; and this night chiefs will purchase life by the exertion of slaves; and it shall be a night, the horrors of which will turn a new-born child gray.

Antar hastened away with his associates, and all being mounted, and armed with spears, and clad in steel and polished corslets, they stood firm, expecting the arrival of the armies; and the warriors were like lions concealed in a thicket.

King Numan and his brother Aswad were in the rear of the army as we observed, and he was greatly hurt at the words of Wirdishan. When the armies reached the valley of Torrents, King Numan halted without the valley, alarmed at the embarrassment of the defile, and the length of the pass. The Persians marched on, headed by the Satrap Wirdishan, like the most rebellious of the fiends; and he was in the utmost anxiety to cast his eyes on Antar; equally so was Hidjar; but they did not enter the valley till night had obscured it with darkness, and had thrown a gloom over all the country.

It was at that moment the horse thundered down

with their riders: the dust and the clouds of sand thickened. The darkness of the night was rendered more frightful by a tremendous storm of wind, that blinded the sight. The sand arose against their faces; and the whole region was in tumult and confusion, from the right to the left. The Arab and the Persian were promiscuously crowded together. The spot being narrow and confined, all were huddled into one mass. At that instant out rushed Antar with his troops of Absians, fearless of death, undaunted in peril. He vociferated in the front of the troops—the mountains rebounded, and the whole valley tottered. The Absians replied with a similar shout, whilst Antar still roared—Ye black kettles of Persians! I am Antar, the cleaver of skulls. The foe heard Antar's yell, and every limb quivered. The Persians muttered out abuse; but their voices faltered; they imagined the valley was going to crush them, and that they saw death in the spot whence Antar issued. He roared, and horror fell upon every horseman; lives were torn from the indistinct forms; horsemen unsheathed the scimitar; and the black gloom of the night became darker still. The mind was in despair; troops disappeared; designs were glorified; falchions glittered; and blood ran down the sides of the valley. Every one doubted whether the heavens had not been precipitated on the earth; they imagined the valley was filled with swords plundering their existence, and spears spoiling them of their lives.

Friend feared for friend; foes were appeased; and relations grieved. Cowards wished they had wings with which to escape by flight; and the water-mills of war turned round. Blood gushed from jugular veins; shrieks and screams re-echoed; blood burst from wounds, and crowds waved like the sea. The east and west were in obscurity; skulls were hewn off from necks; and the thrust of the spear fell at random. Blood streamed upon the ground and earth; and from the terrors of that night youth became gray-haired—torments descended upon them.

In an hour the Persian troopers retreated on their rear; and the Chief Hidjar exclaimed, O my cousins, let us seek the spot whence we came; truly we have erred, in not halting with King Numan: and thus saying, he retired.

But as to Antar, he was hard labouring in the cause of destruction and carnage; he left them wielding their swords one against the other, and sought the extremity of the valley, accompanied with Oorwah's men, and his uncle Zakhmet Uljewad, and his father Shedad, and a party of the tribe of Carad; all were directing themselves against the Persians, to overwhelm them with insupportable calamities. They smote off the heads of every opponent, and left them dead.

They were in this situation when the Chief Hidjar came ambling on the back of his horse, waving in his hand a falchion, sparkling through the intense obscurity of the night. I am the Chief Hidjar, he.

cried; but he had not time to finish his harangue, for Shiboob had drawn an arrow from his quiver, and had fixed it on his bow. He shot it at Hidjar, and the arrow pierced a mortal part of his horse, which stumbled, and hurled him with the crown of his head on the ground; and as he endeavoured to spring on his feet, lo! the Chief Shedad rushed upon him, and wounded him in the arm with his sword; and when he attempted to seize him—No, no! I am Hidjar, the son of Aamir, he cried. Worthless art thou, exclaimed Shedad—unavailing are thy words; neither is there any glory in whom thou dost boast: and he dismounted and bound fast his arms.

Rebia and Amarah were behind him, and when they saw what had befallen the Chief Hidjar, and heard Antar's yells, they trembled for their lives. Fly, my gallant brother, fly! cried Rebia to Amarah—or Antar will make us drink of the cup of death, and extermination. So they fled, and Hadifah with them, for Antar had not recognised them.

The battle raged till midnight; the horses sported with the skulls of the horsemen, and the valley of Torrents being too confined for the multitudes, the Persians were routed in the presence of the Arabs. Scimitars were plied among them; spears plundered them of their lives. At that moment advanced Wirdishan in front of the Persians, surrounded with a body of his host. In his hand he wielded an immense mace, and he came on bellow-

ing like a lion; and in the excess of his alarms and horrors, he scowled round to the right and to the left. On that night were slain only five Absians. Wirdishan having resolved on flight, Antar pounced down upon him, and drove his spear through his right side, and it issued out through his left, and hurled him on the ground. When the Persians beheld the fate of their Chief, they wheeled about their horses and fled.

Now when the darkness became illumined, and the day dawned on the survivors, the foe, horse and foot, rushed out of the valley, whilst Shiboob overthrew them with his arrows, and Oorwah with his people pierced them with their spears till their numbers were diminished, and all hope of relief cut off.

Antar and his warriors returned to the valley of Torrents, where they saw the blood flowing as if in large rivers, and as to the groans of the dying and wounded—no one pitied them. The whole valley was full, crammed with the wounded, and the overthrown, and the lifeless carcasses. Away with the spoils of the dead, said Antar; and depart, and drive the prisoners to the mountains; for this night may be reckoned a night indeed—for by the faith of noble Arabs who keep their promises and engagements, were I not afraid that King Zoheir might be uneasy at our absence, I would attack King Numan here also, and would not leave one alive in this desert, were even Chosroe Nushirwan himself with

them. It will be better for us to fight in the mountains, said Oorwah.

On that night they had made eight hundred prisoners; and when they had collected the scattered horses and dispersed arms, they returned seeking the mountains. Antar was overjoyed at what had passed, and he meditated on the horrors he had endured. Oorwah being by his side, he addressed him thus:

"Hail, O Oorwah! O valley of Torrents, hail—"hail, for ever hail, my cousin! How many are "the youths, whose heads on that night became "grey, beardless as they were! How many heroes "saw the horrors of death, who hoped to see the "morrow's dawn! Death served them with the "cup of absinth, with my sword, and then said, "Much good may it do you. O what a night I "passed with those who beheld death with pride, "Absian heroes, who when they are ranked—their "rank degrades all that is most high and eminent. "When their steeds were spurred over the plain, a "peal of thunder was in their movement. Shouldst "thou ask of me, O Ibla, thou wouldst hear intel-"ligence that would cure even an unknown malady. "I drove away thy foes when they came, all haughty "warriors, seeking my destruction. I assuaged "my heart among the Persians, and I have slain "that imperial Wirdishan. I have tempered my "sword with the blood of glory, that flowed like a

" torrent through the valley. Tell Numan, I am a " lion, with my sword and my spear. My drink is " of the blood of warriors, when their horsemen " have drank of the cup of extinction. Demand " justice on the day of battle. Should the foe out- " rage, I will redress the wrong. Verily, glory is " in the day of contention. When my thrust over- " whelms the assaulting tribes, I glut the birds with " their carcasses, as I destroy them with the edge " of my scimitar. I am appointed for the welfare " of the tribe of Abs, their glory is mine—their " honour is mine."

As to King Numan, he had halted as we mentioned, on the outside of the valley with his Arabs, resolved to move in the morning and join the Persians, when lo! the fugitives from the valley of Torrents rapidly advanced, exclaiming, 'Misery! woe and destruction!' Instantly the horsemen sprung towards their horses, and inquired the news. They related what Antar had done to the Persian forces, that he had slain Wirdishan, and had routed his whole army of Arabs and Persians. Struck with dismay at this news, Numan's forces determined on immediate flight, fearful of death and annihilation. He himself also mounted, alarmed that his troops should run away in disorder: and the horsemen having remained on the backs of their horses quaking through fear of Antar, the irresistible hero, till morning dawned, Numan ordered them to march;

so they proceeded, headed by Prince Aswad, at whose side rode Maadi Kereb. Enter not the valley but with great caution, said Numan, for I calculate something of this kind may still happen to you.

On this account they halted at the head of the valley, and made the Arab tribes march in first, who went forwards brandishing their swords in their hands, but in the greatest terror of Antar, son of Shedad. They entered the valley, and heard the groans of the dying, and saw the torrents of blood; and they were astonished at Antar's masterly contrivance; and though there was not one but was in the utmost consternation, affection for Antar sunk deep into the heart of Numan, and he felt very desirous of the marriage with the daughter of his king Motegeredeh (he had once demanded her, but his messenger had been sent back unsuccessful); for he thought within himself, were I related by marriage to this tribe, my power would be strengthened, and my influence increased.

He thus marched on till he approached the mountains, but Antar had reached them first, with his prisoners and plunder. All exulted in his exploits; the delight was universal; and their hearts were quite merry at the result of the engagement.

Antar advanced towards King Zoheir, and kissing his hand, related what he had done to the Persians, and how many he had slain, and how many he had captured. King Zoheir was highly gratified. O King, said Antar, it is still our duty to prepare

to engage the armies of Numan, and protect our women and families.

So Jareer was directed to order the Absians to take their arms, and issue out into the open space in front of the mountains, ready for action. Let the slaves, said Antar, be divided on the two sides of the defile, and order them to collect a great quantity of stones, and every one they see going forth to fight, they may let pass; but those they see returning, they must stone to death: and if they should see that we are all crowded promiscuously with the enemy, and that we are retreating, then too they must hurl at us the largest fragments of rocks, and prevent us from re-entering the defile.

Jareer having communicated Antar's orders, they prepared for battle, and issued from the valley into the open space, like wild beasts starting from their dens. They mounted their horses armed for the conflict, having slung on their long spears, and girded on their polished scimitars. The slaves also came forth, and stood at the entrance of the defile, and the head of the pass of the mountain, armed with bows and arrows, fierce as male camels. King Zoheir and his sons also mounted, and over his head floated the eagle standard. The battalions advanced, and the squadrons were drawn up. The race of Carad stood forth, and at their head was Antar, like a lion on horseback.

It was scarcely mid-day when the army of King Numan approached like the billows of the tem-

pestuous ocean. Numan advanced, and over his head waved the ensigns and banners; and as he was about to halt, the drums were sounded, and the earth trembled far and wide. As soon as they came up to the mountain, they vociferated in one universal shout, that deafened the hearing, and made the hearts of the timid quake. The Absians answered them with a still louder shout, and dashed their spear-heads against the ground.

King Numan's pavilion was pitched just opposite the mouth of the mountain. Mooferridj also halted with the Shibanians on the right of Numan; the tribes of Zebeed, and Khitaam, and Morad; and on the left were the tribes of Zeead and Fazarah; and on their left were the four thousand Kendehan troopers, whose hearts were greatly exasperated at the capture of their Chief Hidjar.

Antar stood in front of the Absians like a ferocious lion. He took his feet out of his stirrups, and crossed them over the neck of Abjer: he leant upon his tall spear armed with death, for he was entirely unconcerned at the multitude of the advancing forces. He smiled, and seemed exulting on the back of his horse. His father Shedad was on his right, and Oorwah on his left, and the race of Carad behind him. No sooner did the tribe of Kendeh see him than their rage increased; they advanced, and the tribe of Shiban, and his furious adversaries to the number of five hundred followed; all rushed upon Antar, seeking him with their spears and their

swords. On to the fight, O Ebcool ebyez! cried Antar to Oorwah, do you and your men trample down these paltry fellows.

Oorwah did as he directed, and met them with one hundred of his men, and they commenced the battle and the conflict. They thrust at each other with the barbs of their long spears; the dust rose and thickened, but as the numbers increased against Oorwah's people, Antar strengthened them with a hundred more horsemen of the Caradians, with whom went his uncle and his father. Now was their fury let loose; the horses dashed against each other, and skulls flew off from bodies. Antar stood behind his men, and whenever he marked any of them falter, he assaulted the foe like a lion in armour; neither did he desist till he had driven away the enemy, when he returned to his post again to watch over the safety of his friends. Swords continued to labour, and blood to be spilt, and men to fight, and the flame of war to blaze, till the day closed, when the tribe of Kendeh were completely broken, and were in the greatest alarm and distress; many of them escaped by flight, Oorwah and his men having vanquished them by the encouragement of Antar. More than seven hundred of the Kendehans were killed, but only twenty of Oorwah's brave spear-armed heroes.

On their return Antar met them and congratulated them on their success. You know, my cousins, he cried, you cannot rise to honours but by

patience in adversity; and now indeed this day you are clothed in robes of fresh glory, and only those friends have been slain whose deaths could not be deferred: it is not the steel that decides in such points. O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah, we could not have routed the foe but by your aid; this affair is all owing to your intrepidity and your good fortune, for in our troubles we had recourse to you, and your arm would have prevailed had even mountains moved against us. Antar thanked him for his compliment, and they all returned to the mountains As to King Zoheir, he felt himself emboldened by the events of that day, and rejoiced in the victory over his foes. He bestowed abundant praises and thanks on Antar, meeting him with joy and congratulation. O Aboolfawaris, said he, we shall never doubt about the discomfiture of our enemies as long as you live for us; whilst you exist we shall never experience adversity or calamity. Antar dismounted from Abjer, and wished to kiss King Zoheir's hand, but the king bent down towards him and kissed him between the eyes. Know, O king, said Antar, that I have made a calculation of our forces and that of the enemy, and we are superior to them in numbers. King Numan's army consists of seventy thousand bridles, and we amount to four thousand, but every one of our men can trample down a thousand of Numan's, so by this calculation we are even numerically superior to them. O Aboolfawaris,

you are right, said King Zoheir, for where in all Numan's thousands is there a knight like you to encounter and destroy?

In the meantime King Numan had alighted in his magnificent pavilion, and was in consternation at the deeds of the Absians and their hero Antar. This is a fortunate man, he said to himself, for he has made war his habit, his meat, and drink. They reposed that night till morning, when the men arose for the battle and the combat. King Numan mounted, and he placed on his right his brother Prince Aswad, and Maadi Kereb and Jayda, with twenty thousand horsemen, and on his left were Mooferridj, and Rebia and his brother, with the tribe of Fazarah, with twenty thousand more, and he himself stood in the centre with the remainder of the army. Antar also drew up the Absians right and left, centre and flanks. He stationed Oorwah and his men on the right, and with him one thousand horsemen; and on his left were his father Shedad and his uncle Zakhmet ul Jewad, to whom he added one thousand horse. He himself advanced, and with him were one thousand also: he went round to all the heroes, exclaiming that he would lead them to the contest.

When all the forces were drawn up, and every one was in his place, behold the chief Amarah urged his piebald steed between the two armies, and exclaimed in a loud voice, What is it, my cousins,

that drives you on to your own destruction? What have you seen in this black slave that you dare the enmity of King Numan on his account, and have even roused the anger of Chosroe against you? Do you think that this perfidious slave is able to defend you against all these armies that are assembled against you? And you, O King Zoheir, who call yourself the king of the tribes Abs and Adnan, of Fazarah and Ghiftan, of Marah and Dibyan, have you deigned to ask assistance of a black slave, a fellow so worthless and mean? By the faith of an Arab you have clothed us in shame: you had best deliberate again on the state of your affairs. Avert your decided fate; separate yourself from Antar; seize the bastard, and deliver him to me that I may make him over to King Numan, and secure his protection for you. Then let us all join in one party, and return all of us to our native land, and we will wed Ibla to him whose rank equals hers, and whose connexion equals hers—the great chief Amarah for instance, whom all the Arabs know; and thus you, Zoheir and your tribe, will be saved from perdition and destruction. Amarah had not finished his harangue when up came Shedad, and exclaimed, May thy mother soon mourn for thee! may thy family and all thy tribe witness thy annihilation! thou foul coward! thou son of a two-thousand-horned-cuckold! thou Amarah. How oft has he defended thy women from the sharp sword and lacerating spear! But the best thing we can do

is, to ply our edged swords and tall spears till either these Arabs slaughter us or we slaughter them; till either you exterminate us or we exterminate you. Ay, and they will do it too, my brother, cried Amarah to Rebia; by the faith of an Arab, I heartily wish I had not come out into the plain, and had not ventured on a word, for I cannot possibly stand this battle and this contest. So he threw away his spear out of his hand, and shrunk back amidst the shouts from the tribe of Carad. Antar longed to fall upon him, but his father prevented him, saying, O my son, it would be an indignity to yourself to stir a step against this cuckold.

They were thus engaged in conversation, when, lo! Jayda appeared in the midst of the plain like a strong tower immersed in steel; her heart and soul ulcered with anguish. She was robed in garments of black on account of Khalid; and when she was between the two ranks, she thus expressed herself:

"O by my tribe, tears have festered my cheeks,
"and in the greatness of my agony sleep has
"abandoned me. These mourning garments have
"debilitated my energies, and sickness has weakened
"my bones and my skin; for I had a hero whom
"a black slave by his oppression and violence made
"to drink of death. The full moon indeed fell to
"the earth when the arrow was aimed at him, sped
"from the hand of the slave. Now he is gone: I
"am left to my afflictions and griefs, and I endure
"my distresses in solitude. The sword mourns

" him, now he is gone, and in the sheath it bewails
" its condition. O thou dead! mourners have wept
" him in the mountains of Fala and the land of
" Nedjd. He was like a branch in form—the re-
" volutions of fortune cut him off—alas! how cut
" him off! O by my tribe, who will assuage my
" sorrows, and will regard his engagements with
" me, now Khalid is gone?"

Jayda had scarcely finished, when the tribes of Zebeed sent forth one general shout that made the mountains tremble; they remembered the death of their chief Khalid; they poured down upon Antar, uncovering their heads and lightening their garments, to the number of five thousand, and about two thousand of the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam followed them; they all attacked, led on by Maadi Kereb bellowing like a lion. Antar observed their assault: he took with him three hundred horsemen of the tribes of Abs and Carad, and met the seven thousand; and whatever he smote he cleft in twain, and wherever he thrust he slew. The horses closed upon him; he yelled at them, and they dispersed, hurling off their riders. He raved as raves a camel; his eyeballs were fiery red; foam swelled from the corners of his lips, so that every one that beheld him exclaimed, God! how dreadful! They were now in the fiercest of the contest, when Jayda excited the warriors against him, and rallied the men back to the conflict. He rushed upon her like a ghoul or a hungry wild beast, and descended upon her like

the descent of the most voracious lion. Jayda would have fled, but he overtook her, and pierced her through the sides; he broke two of her ribs, having burst through her double armour. In her love of life she threw her arms round her horse's neck, and sprang beyond the dust. When Maadi Kereb saw Antar and what he had done to Jayda, he shouted at him, and rushed upon him, exclaiming, Hola! thou bastard, dost think thy every attempt will succeed? This day I will take my vengeance of thee, and will in thy death wipe out my disgrace. But Antar met him and roared at him; he hemmed him in, and closing all means of escape, he drew forth Dhami, and struck Maadi Kereb a dreadful blow. The sword fell on Maadi Kereb's helmet and cleft it, and also the wadding and the edge of the sword even reached Maadi Kereb's head, and wounded him severely, and nearly killed him. At last he threw his arms round his horse and fled, the blood streaming down his face. As soon as Prince Aswad saw what Antar had done, he made an attack against Oorwah with his twenty thousand, which Antar perceiving, he said to Shiboob, Go to King Zoheir, and tell him not to quit the mouth of the defile, but to send me one thousand of his warriors that I may meet King Numan and his whole army. Antar shouted on Abjer; he encountered the horses' chests, and poured down on them like the rush of a torrent; he slew the men; he destroyed the warriors, and overwhelmed them with

his shouts and his roars in disgrace and ruin, hacking their joints. But when the thousand arrived they made one universal shout of O by Abs, O by Adnan! They assailed the armies and the horsemen; men encountered men, and heroes heroes; blood flowed and streamed; the long spears laboured and also the polished falchions. None were to be seen but the slayers and the slain; the destroyers and the destroyed. Every horseman roared in terrors, and the king of death despatched his messengers to grasp lives. In a short time every resource was resorted to. Every sharp sword continued its blows till the heart and mind were bewildered, and the earth rocked under the weight of the armies, and the undaunted heroes of Aboolfawaris Antar.

This continued till evening came on, when of the Princes' army were slain an innumerable and incalculable host; the remainder took to flight, for in the contest with Antar they beheld death and perdition. The Absians returned exulting in their victory and triumph, and extolling Antar till they came to King Zoheir, when Antar dismounted, and wished to kiss the king's hand, but he had also dismounted, and meeting him, kissed him between the eyes, saying, Admirable are thy deeds, O protector of Abs and Adnan, thou hero of the age! By the faith of noble Arabs, you have this day appeased all my sorrows. By the life of thy head, O king of the age, said

Antar, I must absolutely drag that King Numan from beneath his ensigns and standards, and must make you reign in his stead over all the Arabs! After this they entered the mountains, and reposed with their wives and families.

CHAPTER XXI.

AFTER the retreat of the army, Numan summoned to his presence Amroo, son of Nefeela, and consulted with him about making peace with the Absians. My advice, replied he, is, that to-morrow morning you repeat the attack; perhaps they will be discomfited, and will demand peace, and that would be more suitable to your dignity. Numan approved of his vizier's counsel. The next day both armies started up, eager for the combat. King Numan mounted and arranged the standards over his head. Thus also did the Absians, headed by Antar, the lord of battles. The ranks being drawn up, Antar was anxious to exhibit himself in the field of battle, when lo! a dust arose, and veiling the land, seemed suspended over every quarter of the atmosphere; and there came forth a renowned warrior of immense bulk, like an elephant or a towering palm-tree. The combatants gazed at him in amazement, for he was a victorious warrior, one of the haughty tyrants of Arabia; his name was Ghasik, son of Ashab; and he was followed by twenty thousand horsemen. King Numan had long been accustomed to make him presents, and previous to his expedition against the Absians he had sent to Ghasik to request

his assistance. Now Ghasik was one of the thousand proud tyrants in that age of ignorance, and his form was one of the wonders of that period. He fought with various weapons as a horseman and on foot, and when he ran on foot he would outstrip the snorting steeds. His countries were Tahl and Zal, and he and his tribe worshipped the great dogstar. When Numan's letter reached him he read it, and having understood it, he called out to his people, and instantly set out for the land of Hirah. On his arrival he was told that Numan had already marched, so he proceeded after him till he came up, as we have described; and when Numan knew of his arrival, he went out to meet him, and told him all that had happened: how the tribe of Abs had defeated his armies and horsemen. O king of the age, said Ghasik, this day will I make the Absians mark the horrors I will perform. He dismounted from his horse, and threw off his armour and his coat of mail, till he remained only in his common clothes, his head uncovered and his feet bare. He snatched up two darts that were like sparks of fire; he stood forth between the two ranks on foot and unarmed; and as he approached the hostile armies, O tribe of 'Abs, he cried, stand forth knight to knight, or ten to a knight, or a hundred to a knight, or a thousand to a knight; and if you still desire less odds, attack me with your whole force that I may encounter ye all alone, and may repulse ye with the force of my single arm and my single

elbow. And here I am, without armour or polished mail, for I know that where death is protracted, armour avails not. When he had thus spoken, he swaggered over the plain of heroes till the senses of the wisest and the oldest, as well as of the youngest, were confounded, and thus spoke:

"Armour repels not the javelin of death; so "stand forth, O noble heroes; stand forth, and be- "hold the battle of a youthful hero, firm and resolute "in the scene of contention!"

King Zoheir was stupefied and amazed at Ghasik's deeds and heroism; but Antar, perceiving the state of King Zoheir's mind, exclaimed, O king, what means this apprehension and alarm? Calm your mind; brighten your eye; for by the protection of an Arab, I will put to the rout the whole of this army, were they even as numerous as the scattered locusts; and were I conscious that my single arm would not suffice, I would take ten warriors, with whom I would dash into the midst of King Numan's forces, and I would drag him away either alive or dead, prisoner or a carcass. These words comforted the heart of King Zoheir, and he recovered from his fears and his consternation; and just as Antar was about to dart forward against Ghasik, a horseman anticipated him, and attacked him. He was a celebrated one among the bravest Absians, and one of their most illustrious knights. He rushed upon Ghasik and attempted to charge him, but Ghasik gave him not time to wheel round;

he shouted at him, and smote him with one of his javelins; it fell between the paps and issued out between the shoulders. The two armies were astounded at the blow, for the weapon passed through the horseman and the steel armour he wore. A second stood forth against Ghasik, but he overthrew him; a third, he deprived him of life; a fourth, he united him to his comrades; and a fifth, he left him despairing of existence: and thus he continued till he had slain twenty horsemen. But Antar was afraid that were he now to oppose him the Arabs would say, Antar stood forth against a knight without armour or polished mail; or Ghasik might even say, he attacked me when I was fatigued. Whilst Antar was reflecting on this dreadful affair, lo! his father Shedad stood forth. Ghasik permitted him not to charge, but took him prisoner instantly. No sooner saw Antar the fate of his father than a fire blazed in his heart, and he resolved on the attack, but Oorwah anticipated him. Ghasik had now called for his armour, in which having clad himself, he met Oorwah and assaulted him; he soon wearied him, and thwarted all his efforts, and stretching out his arm like the neck of a black camel, he seized him by the rings of his armour, and grasping him in his hand as if he were a sparrow, he threw him to his slaves to secure with cords, and they placed him by the side of Shedad. Fired by this double calamity, Antar rushed upon Ghasik like a devouring lion. Ghasik received him as the

parched up land the first of the rain. These sturdy warriors fought like ravenous wild beasts; they began the blow and the clash, the retreat and the advance, till the senses and the minds of all present were bewildered. They continued till mid-day, when Ghasik repented of his rash expedition, and of his combat with Antar.

I have no other resource, said he to himself, but to practise a stratagem on him; so, desisting from the conflict: Holà! O Antar, he cried, I have heard that you are one of those knights that love fair play, but this day I perceive you act not impartially towards me. Eh! what justice do you want? demanded Antar. You have engaged me, said Ghasik, when I was fatigued, and I now wish to return and change my horse, then will I come back to attack you, and I will not quit you till this affair be decided. You shall not escape, said Antar, if you wish it: surrender yourself, that you may be a ransom for the warriors you have already taken; or by the faith of an Arab, and by the life of Ibla's two eyes, with me the most sacred of oaths, I will make you a proverb among men! What! cried Ghasik, shall I surrender myself to you without fighting? Will not the Arabs say, May God curse the father and mother of Ghasik—what did he see in Antar that he surrendered himself without a blow? But if you are one of the horsemen that love justice, draw the spike out of your spear, and I will take off the spike out of mine; then let us

engage in the field of battle, and he who touches his antagonist three times, let him do what he pleases with him. Antar thought him sincere. Just as you please, said he. Ghasik took off the spike from his spear, and Antar did so likewise, believing he should thus be on a par with him. Thus was Ghasik strengthened in his courage, and he again had recourse to his stratagems; he snatched from under his thigh a javelin, and shook it till it coiled round his hand; he aimed it at Antar, saying, Take that, thou slave! thou wretch! As soon as Antar perceived Ghasik had deceived him, he tried to avoid the javelin, but he could not; it struck him on the shoulder between the armour and clothes. Antar was severely wounded; he roared out at Ghasik in a voice that made the mountains totter: Thy blow has failed; now prepare, coward, for the blow of the voracious lion. He assailed him, and pierced him with the spikeless spear he held in his hand, and he drove it right through his back quivering; and Ghasik fell dead.

When Numan saw what Antar had done, and how he had pierced Ghasik with a mere staff through the chest, driving it out at his back, rending the steel and the corslet, he said to his attendants: Verily, such a thrust no one could drive—no, neither man nor demon, not even the fiends who rebelled against our lord Soliman. Our character is blasted by this knight, whose equal the age cannot produce: Now is the time to order a general

assault, cried they all, now that Antar is wounded. King Numan did so, and the twenty thousand made the attack as if in one body. But when Antar reached the mountains, King Zoheir came up to him and kissed him between the eyes, thanking and extolling him. He entered the valley, having first recommended King Zoheir and the Absians to stand firm at the entrance of the defile till his wound was dressed; then will I return to the contest, he added; and he entered the tents, and extracting the javelin, cauterised the wound. In the mean time Ghasik's army had assailed the Absians with a force amounting to twenty thousand bridles. The Absians received them with undaunted hearts and Arabian courage. Men met men, and heroes heroes—blood streamed and flowed—joints were hewn asunder. Numan, perceiving the steadiness of the Absians, commanded his left, to the number of twenty thousand, to join him. They made an attack like the attack of a single individual. Soon the numbers increased upon the Absians, and their cries for assistance became louder; but as they were in the thickest of the fight, the chief Antar appeared, shouting in a voice that made the mountains tremble, and the hollows resound: Worthless dastards! Antar, the son of Shedad, is coming. For when his wound was dressing, Ibla came to him; she bound it up, and wept over him. Weep not, said he, for by the life of thine eyes, and the black of thine eyebrows, I care not for those wounds; to me

they are sweeter than the draught of wine: but, for thy sake, I will put to confusion the armies of King Numan, had he even with him all mankind, and the fiends to boot. He and Ibla were thus conversing, when lo! Shiboob appeared like a male ostrich: Hola! son of my mother, he cried, join the Absians, for King Numan has ordered all his armies to attack them on every side and direction. Antar bellowed and roared; he started from the ground on to the back of his Abjer, and sprang forth seeking the engagement, till he reached the scene of horrors, and joined the Absians, who were worsted in the presence of that immense concourse of warriors. So he shouted as we have mentioned; and he assaulted the enemy with a heart that bounded at encountering dangers: at his attack, sorrows were erased from the heart of the Absians; and as they heard his roar, their souls revived; their courage was renovated, and they fought in a manner to startle the boldest. As to Antar, where he struck he cleft asunder; and where he thrust, he destroyed; and when the heroes resisted him, he yelled at them, and made them shrink back in horror. He wrested a horseman from the back of his horse; he raised him in his hand like a pole, and whirling him round as a sling, he struck a second with him down; he precipitated the two, and made them drink of the cups of death. The warriors fled in dismay before him, and every one was horror-struck at his strength.

When Numan saw how Antar and the Absians had routed his army, he ordered his right to attack, and they also amounted to twenty thousand. This mighty host, calculated at sixty thousand, assailed the Absians, King Zoheir always assisting them with a hundred after hundred, till not a single one remained. But their hearts were encouraged by Antar, for they knew he was a resistless hero and a dreadnought lion. At that period the tribe of Abs was the most renowned among the Arabs for courage; and at that moment they were fighting the battle of life and death, and they encountered the forces of King Numan with hearts to which death was sweet and easy. The two armies were mingled together; the sword and spear laboured among heads and carcasses; blood flowed like lakes; God glorified that awful, dreadful day! where the steel armour alone defended bodies, and God prospered what Antar performed in his intrepidity; he overwhelmed them in disgrace and ruin, and executed deeds that will be commemorated for ages, for deaths were at hand, predestined by the will of the God of good and evil. The battle continued to rage between the two armies till the day fled with the light, and night came on in obscurity, and the warriors were separated, after they had filled the earth with the dead.

Numan descended to his pavilions, as he said to himself, Were I related to the Absians, every one on whom the sun shines would stand in awe of me; and

Numan had scarcely alighted when the Arab chiefs, and Prince Aswad at their head, came unto him: O King of the world, said they, our opinion is, that you put to death these two fellows we have in our power (they were Shedad and Oorwah); I will slay them to-morrow, said he, and Prince Aswad rushed from Numan's presence in a great passion; but when they were gone, he sent for his vizier Amroo, son of Nefilah, and imparted to him all the love he felt in his heart for Mootegeredeh, King Zoheir's daughter. What do you wish? said the vizier. To marry Mootegeredeh, and make peace with the Absians; he replied, for were I assisted by such a tribe as this, or a hero like Antar, I should by their means strengthen myself against the deserts and the cities. O King, said the vizier, with respect to the marriage rely on me; but on condition, that you order into your presence Shedad and Oorwah, robe them in garments of honour, and treat them kindly. I will then lead them to King Zoheir, and will demand his daughter for you, and I will not return till all matters are arranged. Numan approved of his vizier's advice, and he reposed that night in tranquillity, for his heart was at ease.

As to the tribe of Abs, when they returned to the mountain; Console your heart and brighten your eye, O King, said Antar, by the life of your head, to-morrow I will decide their fate: I will disperse this army were it as numerous as the sands; and King Zoheir was comforted.

Thus they entered the mountains, and slept that night till morning, when the chiefs of the Absians mounted, brandishing their sharp-edged swords and slinging on their lances. King Zoheir and his sons also mounted, and over his head floated the eagle standard: they were drawn up in front of the mountains like lions of the cavern, and before them stood Antar like a rock. He seated his body on the back of his horse; and drawing his feet out of the stirrups, he folded them over the neck of Abjer. King Numan, as soon as it was day, prohibited any further hostilities; he sent for Shedad and Oorwah, and investing them with robes of honour, he presented them some fine steeds with housings of gold; and as he imparted to them his love for Mootegeredeh, he required them to assist his vizier Amroo; and when they had promised to do so, he directed his vizier to accompany them. The vizier accordingly set out with Shedad and Oorwah, and repaired to the tribe of Abs.

When Prince Aswad saw what King Numan had done, how he had released Shedad and Oorwah, and had sent his vizier to the tribe of Abs to negotiate a peace, he was highly enraged and indignant, and he said to the Arab chiefs, Be calm; till I see what more passes between them. If he makes peace with them, I will write to King Chosroe, and communicate what my brother Numan has done, that he has made peace with the tribe of Abs, and connected himself with them by marriage, though their

slave was wounded, and they had retired to the mountains, and there was nothing more to be done but to take them prisoners. My brother has acted most shamefully, and he has betrayed the imperial government on account of his worldly lusts. I am now convinced it was Numan himself who ordered the Absians to lie concealed in the valley of Torrents; and it was he who plotted the death of Wirdishan: never will I rest till I have contrived his death, and I myself rule over the Arabs, and then will I search out the Absians under every stone and every clod of earth. But the vizier Amroo continued his way with Shedad and Oorwah, till they approached the tribe of Abs, who, on seeing them, advanced towards the vizier and saluted him: he presented them the robes of honour, and the noble horses for King Zoheir, saying, King Numan salutes you, and demands your daughter Mootegeredeh in marriage, so that the two tribes may be only as one tribe: he desires you to demand as much as you please of cattle and he and she camels, &c. King Zoheir made no reply, but turned towards Antar; What is your opinion? said he. O King, he replied, the man has released my father and my friend, and has subdued my pride by his liberality. As to your daughter, she must marry some one, and she cannot find a nobler match than King Numan, for he is the Vicegerent of King Chosroe Nushirvan.

In conformity with Antar's opinion, King Zoheir

gave his daughter in marriage to King Numan, saying to the vizier, I accede to King Numan's wishes out of respect to Antar, the victorious lion. The vizier, much delighted that Mootegeredeh's marriage was settled (and from that day love for Antar entered into his heart), returned to King Numan, and told him the whole affair was arranged to his satisfaction.

When the prisoners on both sides were restored, Antar sent for the chief, Hidjar, and having cut his hair off, released him. But when the tribes of Lakhm and Juzam and the Arab chiefs saw what Numan had done, they first complained of it to his brother 'Aswad, and then returned home. After this the tribe of Abs quitted the mountains with King Zoheir and Antar, and the chiefs, and all repaired to King Numan, who sprang up on his feet, and received them in the most distinguished manner, investing them with beautiful robes. Prince Aswad marked all this, And I, said he, I will connect myself to the tribe of Fazarah. So he demanded Hadifah's sister, for he was much attached to that tribe, and he acted towards them as his brother had acted towards the Absians; he clothed them in robes of honour, made them presents, and distributed gold and silver. They remained seven days in that spot, feasting and carousing; when Numan having made a hollow peace between the tribes of Abs and Fazarah, he ordered the march, recommending the speedy conclusion of the affair

with Zoheir's daughter; and Prince Aswad having also enjoined the same to Hadifah. The tribes of Abs and Fazarah set out for their respective homes and deserts; and King Numan also departed, and when he had reached the throne of his glory, he thought no more of the calamities of fortune. But the Persian troops that Antar had routed in the valley of Torrents, and whose chief, Wirdishan, he had slain, did not stop in their flight till they came to Chosroe, and related to him all that Antar had done to them; how he had slain their chief, Wirdishan. We fled and sought protection, they added, in the tents of Numan, but he ordered us to be driven out, and we have heard that it was he who sent to Antar, and recommended him to lie in ambush for us in the valley of Torrents, and not a creature has ever given us any advice but Prince Aswad.

This account excited Chosroe's rage and indignation, and he swore he would absolutely put Antar to death and all the tribe of Abs, and that he would not leave a head or a tail of them. They were thus conversing, when despatches were brought in by Mubidan from Prince Aswad. Chosroe ordered them to be read; and as soon as he had heard their contents, the light became dark in his eyes. He turned to the eldest of his sons, whose name was Khodawend, and ordered him to mount with a hundred and fifty thousand horsemen, Persians, Turkomans, and Dilemites: March, cried he,

to the land of Hirah; seize Numan and all the grandees of his government, and appoint his brother Aswad to the viceregency over the Arabs; and after that, he continued, march against the tribe of Abs and Adnan. Bring me all their men—all their property—all their women—that I may hang every one of them on the tower of the palace, and in front of them all shall be the slave called Antar. Khodawend expressed his submission, and immediately rose up and gave orders to the resolute knight, the undaunted warrior, named Zerkemal, the brother of Wirdishan, whom Antar had slain: but he, when the news of his brother's death arrived, cut off his hair and took refuge in the mansions of fire; and on this day Khodawend ordered him to select the horsemen for him, and in less than three days he chose out one hundred and fifty thousand horsemen, Persians and Dilemites, every one like a lion when he springs; and on the fourth day the standards of Khorasan and the imperial eagles waved over his head. Chosroe came out to bid him farewell: and having given instructions for his conduct, sent with him his chief minister Buzurjmihr. They continued their march till they came nigh unto Hirah. Numan went out to meet them; but at the sight of the troops he was confounded, and he was certain it was the army of resentment. He had no other resource but to dismount in the presence of Khodawend; and as he kissed the ground and did homage, Khodawend ordered him to be

seized, and also a number of warriors his relations. He appointed his brother in his place, and having encircled his brows with one of the imperial tiaras, he made him King over the Arabs, saying, Know that the just King has heard that you are a faithful adviser of the imperial government, so he has made you ruler over all the Arabs of the desert. Therefore, instantly address in writing all the tribes, both distant and near, and observe who obeys you, and who rebels against you. Those that submit I will favour; but as to those who rebel, I will march against them, and will tear their lives out of their bodies, and then we will proceed against the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and will not leave a man alive among them.

Aswad was overjoyed, and exulted at the good news. He wrote letters to the Arab tribes, ordering them to appear at Hirah for the purpose of joining in the warlike expedition against the tribe of Abs and Adnan. Among those to whom he sent was Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian; and he said to him in his letter, If you wish to be revenged on the lion Antar—to arms! to arms! He moreover informed him of all that had happened to his brother Numan at the hands of Khodawend, the son of Chosroe. This letter he sent by one of his carriers, and then he applied himself to the execution of his duties towards Khodawend.

During all this time Maadi Kereb in his heart had endured what no man ever suffered before. All

the Arabs derided him, and praised Antar, and he made a secret vow in his own mind never to mount a horse, and never to appear in battle, till he should take vengeance of Antar, son of Shedad. Amongst the many others who came to him and reproached him, was one called Direed, son of Samah, and his relation Sebeea, son of Harith, surnamed Zoolkhimar. Direed had lived four hundred years, and he survived even to the coming of our Lord Mohammed, shaded in clouds, on whom be the greatest of blessings and most perfect happiness! Old as Direed was, he was strong-limbed—fierce in battle—patient in difficulties, and on this account the Arabs called him Rihat-ool Harb (millstone of war). When he presented himself to Maadi Kereb with Zoolkhimar (lover of the veil tied round his sword-hilt), he assigned him a dwelling; he slaughtered camels for him and his comrades, and he ate and drank with him.

On the third day Direed being in high spirits with wine, and singing, he began to banter Maadi Kereb, jeering and taunting him in the grossest terms for having been taken prisoner by Antar, and he thus expressed himself in verses:

"Those, whose protector you were, O Maadi,
"are now disgraced; their hopes are disappointed;
"their wives are covered with shame: for should
"he not blush who has aimed at glory, and has
"fought with a slave who has captured him?
"Abandon the scimitar, you cannot wield it; talk

" no more of the honours you once recorded: it is " not for every one who brandishes a sword in his " hand to enjoy a high reputation, or to inspire fear " in his attacks. There is not death in the barb of " the spear, but its employers must instruct it in " the plunder of souls. Die then of grief, or live in " disgrace and despair! Watch no more the nights " you have watched. If you are still noble-minded " and high-spirited, march against the demon of " Hidjaz, and assault him. Fear not the warriors " when they come. Besides him, there is no one " against whom any precautions are necessary. If " you fear, demand succour of Sebeea, and you " will see a lion in war with blood-dyed talons, who, " when he draws his sword, its edge rends the " earth; with it he bears down souls, and it de- " fends those that seek its aid."

On hearing these verses, the heart of Maadi Kereb melted like lead, and he began excusing himself to Direed; he told him what Antar had done to Hidjar, and spoke of the armies and the warriors he had destroyed; how he had slain Ghasik and Wirdishan, and had surprised by night the troops of Numan. Zoolkhimar smiled; O Maadi Kereb, said he, all this proceeds from your inability and your fears, and is the consequence of your alarms and your terrors. You console yourself with the fate of others. May God curse him who cannot reduce Antar to disgrace, or scatter his limbs over the barren waste! By all that will succeed, or have

preceded him, O Maadi, you must unavoidably wash off this garment of disgrace and ignominy, otherwise your affairs cannot be retrieved, and you will be exposed to most galling difficulties; but if you wish, I will go with you, and you shall see how I will treat him, and how I will scatter his limbs over the hills and the plains.

Having remained five days with him, they returned to their own country; and soon after Maadi Kereb wrote to the chief Hidjar an account of all these circumstances, and they all swore they would root out the tribe of Abs and annihilate them.

About that time arrived letters from Prince Aswad; so they departed, revenge their sole object; and being greatly pleased at the captivity of King Numan, and the expedition of the Persians under Khodawend, they quitted their native land, and set out for the tribe of Abs and Adnan. But the first that commenced his journey was Hidjar, for he was resolved to be beforehand with the troops of Chosroe, so that he might acquire high glory to the exclusion of others. In the mean time the Absians, having thus connected themselves by marriage with King Numan, returned home; and as they consulted about the state of their affairs, they augmented their stock of he and she camels, and lived in security with their property and families. Now Antar had recovered from his wound; one day Oorwah came to him with some other noble horsemen, and said, O Aboolfawaris, arise and demand

Ibla in marriage, and let this trouble be removed from our hearts, for now there can be no opposition to your wedding. I will not do that, said Antar, and I will not wed my cousin till Numan weds Mootegeredeh, and when King Numan's happiness is complete, then consult about me as you please, so that the freeborn and the slaves may all rejoice. They were thus conversing and deliberating about such matters, unsuspicious of the circumstances that had happened to King Numan, when in a few days arrived a messenger from Amroo, Numan's minister, with a letter acquainting them with the circumstances, how the dominion of the Arabs had been conferred on Prince Aswad; how he had written to Chosroe, and had given him information unknown to his brother Numan; and how Khodawend had marched, and had seized Numan.

This news excited great consternation among the Absians, and as a confirmation of this intelligence, letters to the same effect reached the tribe of Fazarah, who were in transports of joy, and passed their time in feasting, and drinking evening and morning. Now that Aswad is our relation by marriage, observed Hadifah, he will certainly avenge us: now shall we extirpate every trace of the tribe of Abs and Adnan; now will we plunder and ravage their lands, and now will we slay them young and old. Rebia happened to be with them; O my cousins, said he, all are preparing for war; and whatever tribe comes first, do you join them. Oc-

cupy every road against the Absians; surprise them before the Persians can come up with you; and seize upon their lands and their pastures.

King Zoheir sent for his son Cais, and having assembled the whole tribe, Know, said he, that the Vizier Amroo has informed us that the son of Chosroe is marching against us with the forces of the world. Our departure from the mountains, said Antar, was not a wise measure. Our only resource is to retire to a spot where we may protect our women and families. Then will I encounter the Arab, the Persian, and the Turk, and the Dilemite, till I have exterminated them; and I will show you what I will do with this new upstart king; and soon will I commute the purity of his enjoyments into affliction. My advice, said Shiboob, is, that you depart for the mountains of Adja and Selma, for they are even more inaccessible and stronger than the mountains of Radm: and when you are there, no evil can affect you.

The Absians approved of Shiboob's advice, and as they were all unanimous for a removal—To-morrow night we will depart, said King Zoheir. The next day the Absians struck their tents, and having raised the howdahs on the camels, they drove away the cattle; and they departed traversing the wastes and the sand-hills. But Antar ordered two of his slaves to proceed to the land of the tribe of Fazarah, and directed them not to quit their country till they perceived what new plans they were adopt-

ing. The slaves set out accordingly, and the Absians sought the mountains, where they pitched their tents, and soon familiarised themselves to that country.

The slaves soon reached the land of Fazarah, and they found the whole tribe shouting with joy, for on that day a letter had arrived by a messenger from Prince Aswad, informing them of the march of Khodawend, and the armies of Persia; and now you may gratify your revenge against the Absians, he added.

As soon as they heard this intelligence, they sent to inquire news of the Absians; but finding they had already removed to the mountains of Adja and Selma, My idea, said Rebia (that mine of treachery, fraud, and deceit), to Hadifah, is that you should acquaint your relation Aswad with their flight; and let us join the very first that arrives here, and march against them.

They were thus deliberating, when lo! a dust arose and darkened the whole land, and there appeared the Chief Hidjar, and with him ten thousand of the tribe of Kendeh. The tribes of Fazarah and Zeead went out to meet them, and accommodated them with habitations, and treated them in the most distinguished manner. Hidjar questioned them about the Absians, and when they informed him of their flight to the mountains of Adja and Selma, he expressed his regrets at not meeting them in their own country. Be not afflicted, O Chief

Hidjar, said Rebia; we will march with you, and we will assist you in taking vengeance; for the Arab and the Persian are coming against them in every direction, and they cannot possibly escape death and destruction. We must now exert ourselves to extirpate every vestige of them, and to ravage their lands; and every tribe that comes to us we will join. O Rebia, said Hidjar, we want not the assistance of the tribes, for we have a party sufficiently strong; and soon will arrive Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian, and with him Direed, son of Samah, the Djeshmean; and Zoolkhimar, the Himyarite, accompanied with intrepid armies.

Rebia and the tribe of Fazarah were rejoiced at this news, and the Chief Amarah rubbed his hands in the excess of his joy. O my brother, said he, now indeed this black bastard cannot escape; and I shall now obtain Ibla, and shall be made happy; for really she cannot suit any one but me; and her charms are only to be compared with mine. Rebia laughed at him; O Amarah, said he, my heart tells me Antar will put to the rout all these armies, and he will not even let the first fall back upon the last; for I know of Antar what no one but myself knows.

Now the slaves whom Antar had sent to the land of Fazarah, when they saw the Chief Hidjar and his companions, and heard all their discourse about the Absians, set out for the mountains to join Antar, to whom they communicated what had happened, and all the plans of the enemy.

Antar on hearing this intelligence instantly arose, his courage all on fire, and repaired to King Zoheir, and informed him of all he had heard of Hidjar and the tribe of Fazarah. O Aboolfawaris, said he, we must now indeed make peace with them: but what is your opinion? O King, said Antar, we will leave here one thousand horsemen, with your son Cais, to defend the women and families; we will march with the remainder, and will surprise the tribe of Fazarah and Hidjar, and will soon overthrow all their iniquitous projects. That would be well, said King Zoheir; and they immediately put themselves in readiness, and marched with three thousand men, leaving Cais, with one thousand, enjoining them to be on the alert, and on their guard.

Antar rode by the side of King Zoheir with Oorwah and his people, and his uncle Zakhmet Uljewad; and when they were at some distance from the mountains, Antar reflected on what had occurred to him, and thus expressed himself:

"Our country is laid waste, and our lands de-
"spoiled: our homes are ravaged, and our plains are
"devastated. Let us halt, let us mourn for them;
"for there is no friend in that quarter, and the
"country is ruined. Fate has fallen upon our com-
"panions, and they are dispersed as if they had
"never alighted at their tents. In sportive merri-
"ment they tucked up the garments of joy, and
"their spears were spread along their tents. The
"wand of happiness was waving over us, as if for-

" tune had been favourable, and our enemies thought
" not of us. O Ibla, my heart is rent with anguish
" on thy account: my patience is fled to the wastes.
" Oh Hidjar! Hey, I will teach thee my station;
" thou shalt not dare to fight me—disgraced as thou
" art. Hast thou forgotten in the vale of Torrents
" the deeds of my valour, and how I overthrew the
" armies, undaunted as they were? I precipitated
" them with the thrust, and I abandoned them and
" their carcasses to be trampled on by the wild
" beasts? Shall I not behold thee in anguish to-
" morrow?—Ay; thou shalt not escape from me
" to the arms of thy beloved. I will leave the brutes
" of the desert to stamp over thee, and the eagles
" and the ghouls shall mangle thee. I am Antar,
" the most valiant of knights—ay, of them all; and
" every warrior can prove my words. If you have
" a milch-camel, milk her; for thou knowest not to
" whom its young may belong."

When Antar had finished, they continued their march till they came within two parasangs of Fazarah, when Shiboob directed them to dismount, whilst he himself set out for the land of Fazarah. Returning at midnight, he told his brother Antar and King Zoheir that the enemy had quitted their tents, and were assembled to the number of twenty-five thousand horsemen, under Hidjar, their guide and counsellor: and their plan, he continued, is to extirpate you, and ravage your country; and by morning they will meet you.

Antar selected one thousand Absian horsemen. Go, said he to his uncles and his father Shedad; go by night with King Zoheir, by this road to the right, and surprise the enemy. He also gave Shas a thousand men, and sent him by the left, he himself proceeding with the remainder by the direct road, till they all approached the hostile army, and perceived their multitudes that filled the whole desert. They were in perfect ease and security, and never calculated on the possibility of an attack from the Absians, till the shouts came upon them from all directions, and the herald of calamities cried out over the whole land. They started from their tents, and sprang on their horses' backs, many of them without arms. They scarcely knew with whom they were fighting, with whom they were engaging, or with whom they were talking. But in their fears of Antar, they all drew their swords, and fell upon one another, and soon also laboured the swords of the Absians upon their shoulders.

When the Chief Hidjar heard the voice of Antar, he knew him, and cried out to the Kendehans, O my cousins, stand firm against this bold black slave, for he has only a small body of men with him; and he thinks he will serve us in the same manner he did in the valley of Torrents. But I am aware, that the battle turns one day for you, and one day against you: you have only to resist steadily this black slave, that we may put him to death, and our name be for ever renowned. The dust in the mean

time increased, and the horses trampled over the bodies. It was a night to them abounding in sorrows and tumults.

The three parties of Absians cried out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! they drove frightful thrusts till the horses were unable to charge from fatigue, and dawn was nearly rising on the tribes. But Antar did not discontinue the contest, assisted by the Absians, till morning dawned. Great part of the Fazarah army fled and retired, horror-struck at the blows of the lion-warrior Antar. Still Hadifah and Rebia remained with a few Kendehans, who stood firm, encouraged by their Chief Hidjar. Above three thousand of the tribes of Fazarah and Kendeh were already slain, and only thirty horsemen of the tribe of Abs.

By daybreak the two armies having separated from each other, and the troops having alighted, Hidjar advanced in front of his people, and exclaimed, I must defy Antar to the contest, or shame, disgrace, and infamy will overwhelm me. He waited till the meridian heat was abated, when he mounted his horse, and stood forth between the two armies, and every eye was directed towards him as he thus expressed himself:

"It is only the thrust with the spear that can "relieve my affliction, and the blow of the scimitar "on the chest, and the skull. When the mind can "submit to infamy, words are only words without "deeds. Fortune consists of two days; this is the

"coloquintida of sorrow; the next its food is sweeter "than honey. You dastard, you have clothed me "in shame; but had you done me justice, you "would have trembled before me, and have pro- "strated yourself in disgrace. To-day your chiefs "shall bear witness to my superiority, when I make "you drink of the cups of extinction. You made "me captive in the dark confusion of night, in the "valley of Torrents, by fraud and deceit. Come "forth—let alone nocturnal stratagems—give me "fair play. Now I am on the alert, I will be a lion "without his equal—ay! a lion, a deluge, a sea, "to whose shore there are no bounds; and mine is "a youthful heart hewn out of a mountain."

When the Chief Hidjar had finished, he sought the combat. O King, said Antar, as he stood by the side of King Zoheir, verily I must settle this affair with Hidjar; for without his death, his army will never be routed. And he started out against Hidjar, his head uncovered, and on his body only his ordinary garments. He had thrown aside his armour, and his polished corslet, in contempt of Hidjar. He called out, Eh! thou hast abused me for treachery and stratagem; truly such is the natural disposition of thyself, and thine own tribe; for thou didst come against us with the Arab and the Persian. It was only the judgment-sword of heaven that overtook thee in that plain and waste; and now thou art come against me with the tribe of Fazarah, and hast assembled against me a countless

host; but I have surprised thee, that I may extirpate thee root and branch; then will I return to engage the rest, numerous as is the host that seeks us, and though our party is but small. Thou art clothed in armour, and I am in these simple clothes; my head uncovered, and bare my feet. And thus he continued—

"Verily, thou hast falsely accused me of deceit "and of treachery in word and deed. Thou art "now on the alert; meet me; thou shalt see a war- "rior firm and resolute, fearless of peril. I am he "before whom the lion of the den humbles himself, "in fear of whom Chosroe himself trembles. I showed "thee in the valley of Torrents what my sword "could execute on the chests and the skulls. Wir- "dishan was there; and the sons of horsemen fol- "lowed him like a deluging rain. The horses "quaked under their saddles, and they drank of "death from the velocity of my spear. And thou "shalt be driven into disgrace and calamity without "a friend to aid either in word or deed."

CHAPTER XXII.

ANTAR, having finished, shouted at the Chief Hidjar and rushed upon him; Hidjar met him, and these two obstinate heroes began the combat and the contest; the thrust, the blow, the give and take, now in sport, now in earnest; the approach and retreat, till the warriors were amazed at their manœuvres. Fatigue at length fell on the arms of Hidjar, for he saw that Antar was an irresistible hero, and he repented of his expedition into that land. Antar, perceiving his situation, closed upon him till stirrup clashed against stirrup, and grasping him by the rings of his armour and his corslet, he yelled in his face, O by Abs, I will not be controlled; I am the lover of Ibla; I will not be restrained. He seized him in his hand as if he were a sparrow, and dashed him on the ground. Shiboob pounced upon him, and having bound fast his shoulders and his arms to his sides, drove him away to the tribe of Abs. And as he looked at Hidjar he saw he was in tears like a woman. Eh! O Hidjar, said he, what is it that thus distresses thee? God curse thy father and thy mother! What, wilt engage in hostilities, and now that thy turn of fortune has caught thee dost weep like a woman? O Shiboob, said he, my

tears flow not from my fear of death, or at the occurrence of misfortunes; but as I reflect on the revolutions of Fortune and rapid execution of her revenge, I weep. To no one is she constant: she never beautifies but she deforms, and she never causes a smile but she accompanies it with a tear. How is that, O Hidjar? said Shiboob. Know then, O Absian, he replied, I had demanded some time ago in marriage the daughter of the Lord of Houran, and on her account I had exposed my life to every difficulty and danger; but he would not affiance me to her but through the intercession of King Numan, and just as I was about to be married, King Numan wrote to me ordering me to march against your brother Antar when he was in the mountains of Radm. So I went against him—but that is all over; and when Numan made peace with him he released me, having first cut off my hair. I returned to my family, and asked my uncle to perform the marriage ceremony, but he said to me, Antar has taken you a prisoner, and I will never marry you to my daughter till you take vengeance on Antar. About that time came the news of the seizure of King Numan, and a letter from Prince Aswad ordering me again on a hostile expedition against your brother Antar. I set out against him in the full expectation of accomplishing my vengeance; but I have fallen a second time into his hands, and shame is increased on shame.

Well! O Chief Hidjar, said Shiboob, will you, in-

stead of serving Aswad, go with my brother and aid him in releasing King Numan? Then will your business succeed to your wishes, and you will be raised to the highest dignities, for truly King Numan has been ill requited, and he has fallen into captivity and disgrace. Now, O Shiboob, said Hidjar, I do intreat you to intercede for me this once with your brother, and preserve me from his grasp, then will I, by the faith of an Arab, submit to him, both myself, and my people, and my tribe, even until death; and if after this I ever betray him, may the mother of Hidjar be no more a freeborn woman! O Hidjar, replied Shiboob, I will engage for you, and I will ensure you my brother's protection. But I require of you to swear to me by Him who rendered the lofty mountains immovable; the Giver of life and death; that you will never betray us either in word or deed. And Hidjar took the oath required by Shiboob, an oath very binding among the Arabs at that period; and it is said that if a man ever swore that oath, and afterwards perjured himself, the evening would not shine on him before he would bark like a dog, and the flesh would drop off his bones, and he would die.

Now Shiboob having bound Hidjar by this oath, set him at liberty; he restored to him his arms and armour, and produced his horse. Hidjar mounted, and returned to the scene of contention.

As soon as the Kendehans saw their chief at liberty, they rushed upon Antar from all sides and

directions, and the Absians also attacked; men met men, and heroes heroes. At that moment King Zoheir beheld Hidjar, and supposing he had escaped by force from Shiboob, he called out to his attendants to seize Hidjar, and drag him back into captivity and disgrace. But Hidjar dismounted from his horse, and running towards King Zoheir, he kissed his feet in the stirrup, relating to him all that had passed with Shiboob, and saying, Wait, O king, I will show you what I will do; and Hidjar again mounted, crying out in a loud voice, My cousins, hold back your hands from the blow of the sword, for I have sworn to the Absians to be one of Antar's friends for ever, in order to release King Numan. The tribe of Kendeh no sooner heard the voice of their chief than they withdrew from the contest, and were rejoiced at their deliverance from the presence of Antar. They turned upon the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead, destroying them with the sword, and the thrust of the tall spear. As to Antar, he was hewing down the heroes with his falchion, and revolving in his mind Hidjar's treachery, when he saw him perform these acts, and as he perceived his party annihilating the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead, he was delighted at this alliance with the chief, who no sooner beheld him than he dismounted, and attempted to kiss Antar's feet in the stirrup, saying, O Aboolfawaris, let the blood shed between us be forgiven! God knows all hearts, and may he curse the father of Hidjar if after this he assists the

foe against you, or ever again harbours evil against you! Antar thanked him for his kindness, and having vowed eternal friendship, they assaulted the remainder of the tribes of Zeead and Fazarah, and pierced them as they fled with their long spears, and cut them down with their sharp swords; and they did not stop driving them away till they had forced them back on their tents, when they returned to the scattered horses and dispersed arms, and set out on their way back to Aja and Selma, Hidjar riding by the side of Antar, and rejoicing in his society.

But the chiefs of Fazarah, with Rebia, were remaining quietly before their tents expecting Hidjar would return to them with Antar as a prisoner, when lo! their companions arrived, routed and in flight; they shuddered. Rebia was in great consternation. Alas! said he, sons of my uncle, what has befallen ye? What has happened? And they related the whole: that Antar had taken Hidjar prisoner, and that he had become one of his companions. Rebia was horror-struck; he shuddered and fled, fearful of death and extinction. But as to Amarah, he flung his spear away out of his left hand, and went off at a full gallop, looking behind, terrified at Antar, exclaiming as he went, O that I had indeed kept myself clear of this party!

As to Antar, when he returned from the pursuit his heart was at ease with respect to the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead, for he had obtained of them all he wished and desired. He set out on his return to

the mountains, and as he meditated on the horrors he had endured, he thus expressed himself:

"Ah! O Ibla, keep thy engagement; the past "is past; it is enough to be kept apart from thee! "Youth is not faded, and we are not yet become "old. Fortune has not vanquished our youth; "our sharp scimitars have not failed; our iron "fingers can still wield them! Ask the Fazareans "of us when we assuaged our hearts among their "warriors. We let alone their women, but they "were disordered; and before dawn they were "tearing their cheeks with their hands. We have "filled their country with alarm, and the two tribes "are become our slaves. We have mounted above "the Pleiades in their sublimity, and our valour "cannot be increased; and when our babes are "weaned as infants, our enemies shall bow down to "them in subjection. He who would attempt to "oppress us shall see in us the obstinacy of lions; "we will surround them with the thrusts of the "lengthened spear when battle rages in our hearts. "We will kindle our flames in every contest till "their bones and their flesh shall melt. We will "shoe our horses in every land with their en-"sanguined bones and their dried skins. Our mill-"stones shall grind down the tribes. We have "left their cultivated lands a barren waste. But on "the day of generosity we have given away all we "possessed, and have filled the country with our "liberality and kindness. Who is there to give in-

" formation of us to Numan that soon his deliver-
" ance will arrive? Behold the Persians have re-
" turned discomfited; they have fled with subverted
" standards; the spear's barb laboured in their rear,
" and they float in blood like the human hearts.
" They shall exalt him as their king, and Chosroe
" shall fall; he shall endure what Themood suf-
" fered. I am the slave that encounters deaths; in
" truth, the knight of the noble steeds. In my am-
" bition I will exalt myself to the Pleiades by my
" never-failing fortune and illustrious deeds. I am
" Antar, and my name shall for ages be celebrated
" for sound policy. Mine is a happy star from
" God, who created all mankind his slaves."

As Antar stopped, King Zoheir and his brave companions, and the hardy Kendehans, expressed their delight; but the Chief Hidjar, quite amazed, looked in Antar's face: O Aboolfawaris, said he, God has truly combined in you all intrepidity, liberality, and eloquence, and every noble quality, and has closed them upon the Arab and the Persian. And he who can recollect these verses will never require a companion at night or a friend by day. And these verses were called by the Arabs " convivial, social;" and they are among the chosen pieces of Antar, the lord of battle.

As to Maadi Kereb and the tribe of Zebeed, as soon as they heard of the departure of Khodawend and Aswad against Antar, and that King Numan was in durance, he summoned five thousand of his

tribe, and having written to the Chief Hidjar, ordering him to join him in the land of Abs, he himself hastened away to Direed and Sebeea, to demand their aid and assistance. And when Maadi Kereb alighted at Direed's, and had related all that had happened to King Nûman, and the departure of Khodawend and Prince Aswad with the Persians and the Arabs against the tribe of Abs and Adnan, the light became dark in the eyes of Direed; and turning towards Maadi Kereb, If this system, said he, should really be persevered in against the Arabs, those filthy Persians will soon overpower us, and our women will be sold in the cities of Turcomania and Dilem. As to me, I will never encourage this conduct against the Arabs; for I will address the tribes in writing, and inform them so. I will not move hence till I hear what has passed among the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and the account of King Zoheir's admittance of Antar to their connexion, for by the faith of an Arab, were not Antar among the Absians, I would instantly proceed myself to assist them against the invasion of the Persians. But I am afraid of the upbraidings of the Arabs, that they will say, Direed, son of Samah, lord of the tribe of Howazin, entered the service of Antar, who was a slave and a shepherd. But as to you, Maadi Kereb, I cannot possibly march with you, now that the Persians have seized the person of King Numan. I will not violate the sanctity of the sacred shrine; for I know that Prince Aswad will not enjoy his

dominion long, and never will they prosper who submit to him; and moreover, between me and King Numan there is an engagement which I cannot falsify.

These words created great distress in Maadi Kereb's mind, and his resolution wavered. But in three days he departed, and having assembled ten thousand horsemen, he set out to attack the tribe of Abs and Antar; but in his way he passed through the territories of Hidjar, where he heard of his expedition against the Absians, and that he had been joined by the tribes of Fazarah and Zeead; and we have learnt, they added, that the tribe of Abs has fled to the mountains of Adjà and Selma; for as soon as they understood the Chief Hidjar had marched against them, Antar and King Zoheir set out with two thousand horsemen, with the design to surprise the tribe of Fazarah and the Chief Hidjar; therefore in the mountains there only remains Prince Cais with one thousand warriors to protect the women. This intelligence delighted Maadi Kereb. Oh! exquisite! he cried; and turning to his companions, he added, Truly all I wished and expected has succeeded: and he congratulated them on the plunder and the accomplishment of their desires; and they instantly departed, traversing the plains and the wastes till they came near the mountains.

Prince Cais had stationed scouts on the summits of the heights and defiles, and as soon as they saw

the dust, they immediately gave him notice; and he ordered all the warriors to mount—they obeyed; and with Cais at their head, they hurried to the mouth of the pass like lions in a den, where, perceiving the desert waving like the sea with troops and armies, Prince Cais despatched an Absian horseman to inquire the news. He spurred on his horse till he came among them, and cried out in a loud voice, Tell me, O Arabs, who ye are before the battle rage between us... O Absian, said Maadi Kereb, advancing, ye are of little shame that have admitted to your connexion the offspring of a slave-woman. Verily your destruction is at hand, the Arab and the Persian are in quest of you, and my advice is that ye surrender yourselves to me without fighting. But as to your question about our rank, we are the tribe of Zebeed, and I am Maadi Kereb. I have stirred up against you all who have blood or vengeance to demand of ye.

The Absian on hearing this returned to Cais, and reported the circumstance. Rage was kindled in the countenance of Cais; he thundered from the mountains, and behind him followed the noble Absians whose intrepidity was proverbial. They shouted so that the mountains were in convulsion, the universe was agitated at their roars, and the face of day was blackened. The blasts of death were blowing with tempestuous gusts—the army of Maadi Kereb rushed upon the Absians—men met men, and heroes heroes. Blood streamed and

flowed—limbs were hewn off—horrors increased. Maadi Kereb penetrated through the Absians, for he was one of the thousand tyrants of that age of ignorance; he dashed down heads under his feet, he cut off wrists and fingers, and performed deeds that confounded the reason. The Absians were engaged in a sacred war, and they preferred death to flight, and would not live objects of shame among the Arabs. For in those days the Absians were the firebrands of war in bravery and undaunted spirit; they dreaded ignominy. The day seemed closed upon them, and the land was obscured in their eyes. They continued the engagement till the day fled, and darkness came on with thick obscurity, when they returned to the mountains, and Maadi Kereb halted at the entrance.

Cais assembled the Chiefs; Cousins, said he, my advice is that we continue the fight till my father and Antar return. They approved, and kept on the defensive till daylight appearing and the stars vanishing, the enemy arose up against them. Maadi Kereb advanced in front, and wishing to exhibit his courage, Hola! tribe of Abs! he cried, where is your black slave, whose aid you seek, and of whose force ye boast? Let him stand forth this day, and protect the women, and by the truth of Him who orders the rain to fall, and the desert to be clothed in green, I will leave for myself and ye too a tale to be recorded, and an example to be cited for ages. And he twisted and tossed about his spear in a style to

amaze the stoutest heart. But Cais observing Maadi Kereb's excessive vanity, Desist from the fight, he said to the Absians, whilst I go forth against this coxcomb, that prides himself above his fellows. And he urged on his horse till he stood before Maadi Kereb; How long this presumption? he shouted out, for thou art the very person our champion took prisoner: he reduced thee to disgrace, and was so kind as to set thee at liberty, having first cut off thy hair; he treated thee nobly, but his generosity was thrown away on thee, and thou hast acted like a low-born coward. Were Antar here, he would fight thee, and would tear out thy life from between thy sides; and though he is absent to-day, he will not be long absent; to-morrow he will come, and thou shalt see the calamities he will bring upon thee, and how he will punish thee, for truly thou hast sinned against courtesy; that is, if thou escapest safe from my presence, and thou bearest no marks of my spear. Cais thus continued in verse:

"Had you any generosity, O Maadi, you would "not have come with horses and horsemen to attack "us. Our Knight took you prisoner; he pardoned "you, and thought you sincere, ingrate as you "are. You are returned; all kindness was thrown "away on you, for when a dastard is trusted, he "becomes a traitor. We are Princes, and you perceive the rest of the world in the blow of the sword "are comparatively but slaves. God has favoured "the Absians, and has ennobled them with the

" honours of crowns and tiaras: had he granted us " the power, the land should flow with beneficence, " so that Noah would imagine he had given us the " flood. Even Chosroe lives in fears at our great- " ness; he dreads us, and the princes of the earth " tremble at us."

When Cais had finished his verses, Maadi Kereb vociferated at him, and attacked him. Cais received him as the parched up earth the first of the rain. The contest raged between them in the thrust and the blow; horrors and dreadful acts took place between them. But Cais was no match for Maadi Kereb in skill and prowess, and when the Absians saw the situation of their Prince, they resolved on making the assault, and by their aid to deliver him from his foe, when lo! the Zebeed warriors attacked at once, and endeavoured to finish the affair, and accomplish their hopes, and plunder the property; but the Absian heroes also assailed, and they were in one promiscuous confusion on the plain of battle: the penetrating spear was at work, and also the Indian blades. Calamity was thus removed from Cais, for he was near his destruction and death. He escaped from his antagonist, but not by flight. Maadi Kereb had wounded Cais in two places; but when the armies rushed upon one another, Maadi Kereb's attention was called off from him, and he routed the warriors till he drove them back to their mountains, having slain upwards of two hundred men. Still the Absians stood firm at the entrance; the

two armies continued to fight and smite till evening came on, when Maadi Kereb returning with his associates, reproached them for having made the attack. They alighted, and reposed till morning: Come on, cried Maadi, come on; plunder the Absians, before any Arabs arrive to prevent you.

At the word the horsemen mounted, and prepared for the battle of swords and spears; and as soon as day dawned on the Absians, there burst upon them the united cries of women and children: they unsheathed their swords, they shook their spears, and resigned themselves to death.

When Maadi Kereb observed the conduct of the Absians, he dismounted, and his warriors did so likewise. The Absians too followed their example, and every hope, every expectation was extinct. Grief fell upon the brave; the dust rose, and clouded over them; the party became quite a proverb; and they continued in this state till evening.

But Antar and Hidjar returned to the mountains. Antar was overjoyed in the society of Hidjar, and when they approached, O Aboolfawaris, said Hidjar, it occurs to me that I ought to precede you, because I had engaged myself with Maadi Kereb, to make a joint attack on your country with him, and Direed, and Zoolkhimar. I fear, he may have taken his road by the mountains: now I think, it would be advisable to send on Shiboob to see what is going on, and let him return quick.

Antar immediately ordered Shiboob to advance

towards the mountains, which he instantly did: he gave his feet to the winds, and sought the wide desert till he reached the mountains, where he heard the cries of the Absians, and Maadi Kereb shouting to his people, "to-morrow, ye shall plunder the enemy!" As soon as Shiboob had recognised Maadi Kereb, he hastened back to his brother. Know, son of my mother, he cried, Hidjar was correct in his supposition—our friends are reduced to extremities, and there only now remains to drag them out from between the mountains. Eh! Ebe-reah! said Antar, who has done this? Maadi Kereb, he replied, and with a world like the sands: and when I approached the mountains, I saw Maadi Kereb going his rounds, promising his people the pillage of all the property of the tribe of Abs! At hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of Antar. O, by the Arabs, he cried, it is absolutely my bounden duty to make an example of that Maadi Kereb, and those Zebeedians, for those who will benefit by the warning.

He was about to put his horse on a full gallop, but the Chief Hidjar prevented him. Whither art thou going, O Aboolfawaris? he cried. To fight with Maadi Kereb, said Antar. I request of you, O Aboolfawaris, said Hidjar, by the life of Ibla's two eyes, that you will let me only march against him. I will requite him for his deeds; I will frighten him with your strength, and the greatness of your power. If you approve of this, it will be

the best plan, and I will bring him to you a prisoner. Do as you please, said Antar.

Upon that, the Chief Hidjar set out with his noble Kendehans, and he travelled from midnight till the dawn of day, when he reached the mountains, and perceived the engagement. Woes of battle be on you, O Maadi, exclaimed Hidjar; misery to you, and to yours, henceforward. Could Antar come and behold the state of his cousins, he would not leave a Zebeedian alive: and he galloped down from the end of the desert, and the tribe of Kendeh followed eagerly, seeking the scene of contest.

When Maadi Kereb saw the armies advance, he thought they were of the tribe of Abs. He called out to his nearest attendants, and rushed towards the approaching forces; and behold! he saw the Chief Hidjar. No harm to ye! he exclaimed; for this is the Chief Hidjar, and I have been expecting him, that we may totally exterminate the tribe of Abs. He urged on his horse, and his heart was filled with joy. Welcome, I greet thee, my dearest brother, my truest friend, he cried. By the faith of an Arab, thou art come exactly in time to take thy share of the plunder.

The Chief Hidjar smiled: Your design is frustrated, O Maadi, said he; truly, you imagine my extraction different from my father's and grandfather's, for liberality should not be lost on mankind; and he who is nobly born and connected, does not act like a base coward. How is this, said

Maadi Kereb, you are bound to me, O Hidjar, by an ancient covenant. Ay, said Hidjar, by the lord of Zemzem, and the sacred wall, if you listen to my advice; otherwise, I must fight you with my sword and my spear. Maadi Kereb stared in amazement in Hidjar's face, for he knew not what had happened. But the Chief Hidjar related every circumstance about Antar, describing his liberality and courage, and how he had taken him prisoner, and delivered him over to Shiboob, and how he had set him at liberty on his taking the oath, and I assure you, continued he, O Maadi, were Antar to give me this day his camels, I would tend them; and were even mountains to turn on me I would encounter them; and if, O Maadi, you can submit yourself to what I have submitted, make a contract with me on this point, and be one of Antar's adherents, else, come on to the fight and the combat, and away with all dissimulation.

Maadi Kereb was in great consternation, and his rage blazed the more. Eh, then, O Hidjar, he cried; hast thou entirely disgraced all thy race on account of Antar? Away with such folly, said Hidjar, for I will not permit you to speak thus of Antar; he is superior to all mankind, male and female, and in this age is Antar unequalled; for, to engage a thousand horsemen, or ten thousand horsemen, or a single one, is all the same to him; and his soul aspires to nothing but conquest over all the Arab warriors. I used to think myself the knight of the universe till I en-

gaged him; but in him I perceived prodigies; and as soon as he made me prisoner, Shiboob gave me protection, and assured me of security, and Antar set me at liberty, as if I had never entertained any evil intention against him. When I perceived this, my soul was subdued. I became one of his comrades. So, Maadi, think no more of assisting the Persians, but eagerly seize this opportunity, for I have left Antar behind; King Zoheir and all the tribe of Abs are coming after me. He then told him that Antar had sent on Shiboob to observe what they were doing, and he returned, continued Hidjar, giving us an account of all you had done to his cousins. Antar wished to march against you, but I dissuaded him out of regard for you. So adopt this plan before death be at hand; do not expose your life to dangers and perdition.

On hearing all this, Maadi Kereb recollected the words of Direed, and he knew this would be his advice: O Hidjar, said he, how can you soften the hearts of the Absians towards me, after all I have done just now? That business, said Hidjar, will not tell against you, for I will be a mediator in this affair, and you will moreover be a strong support of this tribe, particularly when we have released King Numan, you and your party will seize the property of the Persians, and will hew off their heads, and you will become also a champion of the sacred shrine. Hidjar continued to urge Maadi Kereb on this subject, till he gained him over, and he con-

sented, and he swore by the oath by which the Arabs swore.

Maadi Kereb returned towards his tribe, and acquainted them with the event, and they were greatly delighted. But the auxiliary Arabs that were with him dispersed and sought their homes, fearful that Antar would put them to death. Thus the tribe of Kendeh joined the tribe of Zebeed.

Prince Cais and the Absians were in the greatest distress at the arrival of Hidjar, for they thought he would assist Maadi Kereb. Their shouts and screams increased, but Hidjar sent a horseman to inform them, and quiet their alarms, and by evening arrived the tribe of Abs with King Zoheir and Antar. The chief Hidjar met them with Maadi Kereb, and informed them of his adhesion. Maadi Kereb advanced and kissed Antar's and King Zoheir's hand, saying, O Aboolfawaris, all blood between us is forgiven, and the merciful God knows all hearts. O Arabs, said Antar, we have only acted thus out of our partiality for King Numan, and on account of the sacred shrine, for if the Persians possess themselves of it, they will root out every vestige of the Arabs from every region. All present agreed in the truth of this observation, and thanked him for his conduct. He clothed them all with honorary robes, and the tribes being mixed together, they entered the mountains, amounting to fifteen thousand warriors, proverbial for their prowess. They reposed that night, and in the

morning they slaughtered he and she camels, and made entertainments and feasts for seven days. On the eighth day came Jareer from the land of Hirah, and told his brother Antar about the armies of Arabia and Persia, describing to him the various tribes and nations that were assembled. Well, Jareer, said Antar, who are those who have submitted to Prince Aswad, and with how many thousand has he set out? O son of my mother, he replied, those who have submitted to Aswad are all those with whom there is blood and vengeance against you, and those who hate King Numan. But he did not form any regular plan till Rebia came to him with Hadifah and the tribes of Zeead and Fazarah, and those who accompanied them were in tears in the presence of Aswad, and demanded his immediate departure to extirpate every trace of ye, and to ravage your country. He assented, and swore that he would not leave an individual alive in your country, not even a fire-blower. Khodawend had determined on dividing his forces into two armies, one against you, and the second against Mecca. But when Rebia and the tribe of Fazarah arrived and acquainted him of Hidjar's having made peace with you, they advised the Prince to march his whole army against you at once; And let us take, said he, all the tribe of Abs prisoners in disgrace and misery. Khodawend approved of his proposal, and ordered the army to march. They have only left one thousand Persians in Hirah as a

guard over King Numan and the few horsemen who remain his friends. I did not quit them till the universe was in confusion with the glitter of arms, and swords, and corslets.

Antar shouted at Jareer, Eh! enough of your description of those greasy caldrons and Persians, he cried; by the faith of an Arab, I will disperse their armies; I will not even let the first join his nearest neighbour. And he proceeded to King Zoheir, and informed him of the news. War; war alone must be our object, said the King, we must defend our women and our families; but we do not know whether these who have associated with us will fight with us cordially, or whether they be false companions. O King, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab, let us but exchange a single look, and should only ten horsemen of ours be killed, then will they seek each other's blood in revenge and slaughter.

Upon this they mounted, and quitting the tents, informed their allies of the advancing armies, and that two hundred thousand horsemen were marching against them. Great indeed would be the disgrace, said he to Hidjar, should we permit these Persians to trample down our land under the hoofs of their horses, and King Numan not regain his dominions. What is your determination, O Aboolfawaris? said the chiefs. My determination is to meet them, said he. But, said Prince Cais, Jareer has informed us, their armies are most

numerous, and Khodawend is on his way against us; and when he quitted Hirah, there were only one thousand Persian horsemen left behind; now it strikes me, that about one hundred of our horsemen, mounted on swift strong horses, should be detached; let them march to Hirah, where they may put the Persians to the sword, and release King Numan; thus shall we succeed in our views, for this army cannot reach us for some days, and should it arrive, we shall be able to cope with them till King Numan returns, when many of the tribes will join him. All present highly approved of this proposal. God be with you and your father, and may Lat and Uzza bless you! cried they all. It will do, said Antar, I will myself undertake it with ten horsemen! O my cousin, said King Zoheir, your departure from the Absians at this moment would be very unadvisable, particularly as Hirah is very distant, and we are but a small party. No one but myself, said Hidjar, shall go to King Numan. Antar thanked him: that will do, said he, you ought to go. Take Oorwah and his men with you. Hidjar assented, and made ready that very day with one hundred of his own tribe, and he also took Oorwah and his people, who being mounted on swift noble steeds, departed for the land of Hirah; and when they were gone, Antar, accompanied with Maadi Kereb and two hundred horsemen, daily roamed away from the mountains, to ascertain what was going on. They continued thus for ten days; but on

the eleventh day, behold a dust arose that closed up the whole region. There appeared five thousand horsemen, the advanced guard of the Persian army, with a knight called Shahmerd, and he was an irresistible tyrant, and an untractable devil. This, said Maadi Kereb to Antar, must be the advance of the Persians. My advice is, said Antar, that we make a dash at them, and so saying, he urged on his horse Abjer, and drew up his men. Maadi Kereb did so likewise. The Persian chief saw them advance, and he could not make them out; as he said to his people, I cannot imagine what this small party can mean, for if it is the advance of their forces, whence can they have heard of us? They must be coming to demand our protection. However, let one of ye go forward and inquire. The Persians still advanced to the number of one thousand. Maadi Kereb shouted to his hundred men, and wished to assault them. But, said Antar, no, my brother, be not off your guard, and do nothing that may prove disadvantageous. How is that? said Maadi Kereb. Ay, said Antar, for if you deign to meet a thousand Persians with a hundred Arabs, our reputation will be lost amongst those greasy kettles: let you and I attack this thousand with ten men alone, and destroy them in the desert; let us fill their hearts with terrors. I will attack them alone, said Maadi Kereb, and will disperse them with my arm and my wrist. Antar attacked the right, and Maadi Kereb the left, and they were

immersed in dust; they both roared out like lions; all eyes were fixed upon them. The right was driven in confusion upon the left. The Persian leader, observing the two knights attack the thousand, was amazed and startled; he instantly dismounted, and worshipped the sun in blasphemy and pride, saying, Let I and you laud the unity of God! Do you see, said he to his companions, these two knights of the sheep-drivers, engaging the thousand Persian horsemen? This is the stupidity of the Arabs, said his comrades; soon will you see their heads laid low.

He remained gazing for an hour, when lo! the Persians rushed out from beneath the dust, flying away, pursued by the roars of Antar and Maadi Kereb, like peals of thunder in a cloud; and they continued their flight till they stopped before their chief. Eh! how is it, he cried, that two horsemen of the shepherd Arabs have attacked a thousand knights of Persia, and have routed them as a wolf the sheep? He shouted to his five thousand, and they rushed upon Antar and Maadi Kereb, who received them as the parched up earth the first of the rain. Joined by the Absians and Zebeedians, Maadi Kereb exhibited in the contest such intrepidity, that Antar was greatly astonished; for he only looked on and encouraged the warriors. He was, however, on the watch for Shahmerd, whom he saw brandishing a mace in his hand as he invoked the fire. Antar shouted at him—he bel-

lowed at him—he made him quake, and terrified him—he drove his spear through his chest. The spear penetrated through him ten joints of a reed out at his back, and hurled him dead to the earth. But when the Persians saw their chief a corpse, they wheeled round in flight, and retired in haste, and escaped, whilst Antar and Maadi Kereb returned with their comrades to the scattered horses and dispersed arms, and property and baggage.

On their way back to the mountains, exulting in their success, Antar thanked Maadi Kereb for his part in the combat, saying, By the faith of an Arab, had we informed our friends, and waited for them here, never would we have quitted the field till we had made a more serious impression on the foe. O Aboolfawaris, said Maadi Kereb, our fighting before the mountains will be more judicious; (and Maadi Kereb was afraid that Antar would remain in that spot with only two hundred opposed to two hundred and fifty thousand warriors, all armed with spears). Antar assented; and he travelled on, thus expressing himself:

"Stop at home, if thou art in sorrow about "its lands, then perhaps thine eyes may weep in "tears. Ask of the baggage-camels, when they de-"parted, and when they will return! Dwelling of "Ibla! She is far away from thee! She sighs, and "my eyes are in agony at her sorrows. O land of "Shoorebah! may the clouds moisten thee!—May "the pouring rain bedew thy soil!—May the

"spring clothe thy lands in robes of flowers!—
"May the country be perfumed with their fra-
"grance! How often have I embraced in thee the
"lovely virgin, whose companion was revived in
"the obscurity. The sun, when it rose in splendour,
"worshipped her charms, and her appearance il-
"luminated the darkness. Death, daughter of the
"noble-born! is like a garden, and my spear is its
"branches and its roots. To-morrow there shall
"pass from my hand to the Persians a cup more
"bitter than the poisons of medicines. I will make
"them taste of thrusts that shall disgrace their
"chiefs, and shall make unweaned infants turn
"grey. When the armies of Chosroe pour down
"upon me, thou shalt see what will become of their
"limbs. I will fight them till they, high and low,
"shall be exhausted, and shall complain of the hor-
"rors of the dust. I will leave their flesh for the
"ravenous lion, and their horses and their armour
"for my comrades. O Ibla! were Death a sub-
"stance, it should bend and bow down before me."

As soon as Antar had finished his verses, Maadi Kereb was in amazement at his courage and his eloquence. May God never abandon your mouth, said he, and may no one ever harm you! And they continued seeking the mountains till night had darkened the land.

Now as they had been a long time absent, King Zoheir and the Absian chiefs mounted, and went in quest of them till they met them. And Antar

related to King Zoheir how they had treated the advance of the Persian army, and how they had routed them, and that he had slain Shahmerd. To rout the advance, said King Zoheir, is an indication of victory and conquest, and we ought to offer our thanksgiving to the God of Old, the Creator of mankind. They entered the mountains, and told the horsemen what had happened, and the Absians were delighted; they reposed that night till daybreak, when they rushed out, demanding the combat and the conflict, and lo! the Persian armies appeared, and their dust rose on high till the whole country was obscured. The wild beasts fled from their dens, and the standards appeared. To-day, said Antar to his associates, will the glories of warriors be conspicuous. He stationed over every troop a knight, whilst he superintended them all like a lion.

When the Persians advanced and saw the small numbers of the Absians (but they were like ferocious wild beasts), they poured down upon them like a deluging rain. The Absians received them with blows that stupefied hearts, and thrusts that blinded the vision. Antar stood apart from the scene of battle protecting his men; sometimes he rushed to the right, now to the left, and having overthrown the heroes, he retired to his post. And whenever he perceived his party hard pressed, he was ready to assist them. Maadi Kereb observing this, acted in the same manner. The battle con-

tinued thus till mid-day. Consternation fell upon the Persians, when, lo! Khodawend approached with the great body of the army, and seeing the conflict raging, he called out to Zerkemal to withdraw the army from the contest, saying, We will establish ourselves here, and despatch a messenger to the Absians, for they have always paid us great respect; and perhaps now they have repented of their conduct, they will probably return to their allegiance, and seize the person of that slave, the worthless Antar. Upon this Zerkemal called off the army from the Absians. And the Persians alighted in their tents, and the land and the desert were filled, and whilst they were reposing, Khodawend ordered a letter to be written to the tribe of Abs commanding them to submit; and let it be mentioned that in that case I will stand as mediator between them and my father, but if they resist I will not spare one of them either high or low. Accordingly the vizier wrote a letter to King Zoheir to the above effect, stating,—Khodawend is advised to destroy you, but he has had compassion on you; he has resolved on acknowledging you the supports of his government, and the abettors of its greatness. Feel therefore the value of this intention, and presume not to thwart the imperial government.

Having folded the letter, he gave it to a satrap, and ordered him to depart. He also honoured him with ensigns and standards, and gave him an escort of twenty Persian horsemen, with an interpreter

called Ocab, son of Terdjem. The tribe of Abs had alighted, and not one remained on horseback but Antar and Maadi Kereb, who on observing the satrap, Antar said to Maadi Kereb, O chief, verily there is a satrap advancing towards us, he probably wants us to surrender ourselves to him that he may take us and hang us on the balcony; I rather wish to begin with them before they commence with us. They were in conversation, when lo! the satrap came up to them; he did not salute them, but asked for King Zoheir. He inquires for King Zoheir, said the interpreter, for he has a letter from Khodawend for him. We, O Arab, said Antar, have read your letter before its arrival; in it your prince orders us to surrender ourselves without fighting or contending. Pull that satrap off the back of his horse, said he to Shiboob; ay, and the rest too. Seize all their property; and if any one dares struggle with you, treat him thus—and at the word he expanded his arm, and pierced the satrap through the chest, forcing the spear out quivering through his back, and he hurled him down dead. When his comrades saw what Antar had done, they cried out for quarter, and surrendered themselves to Shiboob, who bound them fast by the shoulders. As to the interpreter, he shuddered. May God requite you well, said he, for you have answered us before even reading the letter. If this indeed is the honorary robe for a satrap, let it not be so for an interpreter; for I have children and a family, and

I am but a poor fellow. I only followed these Persians, but with the prospect of gaining some miserable trifle. I never calculated on being hung; and my children when I am gone will remain orphans. So he wept, and groaned, and complained, thus expressing himself:

"O knight of the horses of warriors that overthrow; their lion, resembling the roaring ocean. "By your awful appearance you have disgraced "heroes, and reduced them to despair. As soon as "the Persian sees you he is dishonoured; if they "approach you, and extend their spears against "your glory, they must retreat, or there is no security. Have compassion then on your victim, a "person of little worth, whose family will be in "misery when he is gone. Not the thrust of the "spear or battle are among my qualifications. I "profess no fighting; I have no cleaving scimitar. "My name is Ocab: but indeed I am no fighting "man, and the sword in the palm of my hand only "chases pelicans."

Antar laughed at Ocab's verses. O Aboolfawaris, said Maadi Kereb, it would be foul indeed to hang this fellow. He has confessed his crime. Antar let him go. Return to your family, said he, and go no more to the Persian, or you will be in danger; for when they see you safe they will accuse you, and perhaps will put you to death. You are very right, my lord, said he: by the faith of an Arab, had I known these Persians would have been

thus worsted I would not have quitted you; and probably I might have managed to secure some of their goods, and have returned with it to my family. Sheikh, said Maadi Kereb, this business has failed: but, come, take the spoils of this satrap, and return to your family, and pass not your evening a dead man. Ay, my lord, said Ocab, he is a wise fellow who returns safe to his friends. So he ran up to the satrap, and despoiled him. Round his waist was a girdle and a sword, and when Ocab saw all that wealth he was bewildered; and having completely rifled him, O my lord, said he to Antar, I will never separate from you again. I wish you would present me to your king, that I may kiss his hand, and offer him my services: then indeed I will for ever cleave to your party, and whenever you slay a satrap I will plunder him. Antar laughed heartily: But, said Maadi Kereb, O Aboolfawaris, you have slain the satrap, and now King Zoheir cannot consult with him. O Maadi, said Antar, whenever any one comes to order us to surrender ourselves to him we will hang him, and not parley with him. Antar joined King Zoheir, and gave him the letter; he read it, and was much agitated. My lord, said Antar, what is the answer? Hanging and beheading must be the answer, said King Zoheir, so that Khodawend may send us no more of his satraps. I have done so, said Antar; and going out he saw that Shiboob had hung most of them; only three remained. He ordered him to

shave their beards, and cut off their ears, and sling the heads of those he had hung round their necks, and send them back to their prince. Shiboob did as his brother ordered: one of them died on the road; two arrived, and their clothes were of the cornelian dyes; and when they stood in the presence of Zerkemal they grunted and blasphemed, saying, the fault is Khodawend's, who condescends to negotiate with these Arabs. Zerkemal introduced them to the prince, and informed him what had passed. Khodawend, on hearing this, swore by the fire that they must bring before him every Arab fettered, with their hands bound round their necks, or he would put to death every Persian he had with him. He passed that night in great anxiety for the appearance of day; and soon the men shouted among the troops; the horsemen mounted; the two armies prepared; the dust arose and obscured the land; the trumpets resounded, and shouts were raised; the imperial standards advanced; the Arab horse pranced, and the tribe of Abs also were eager for the contest in defence of their women and families, but they did not move far from the entrance of the mountains. Antar attacked the Persian, and scattered away their skulls. He wished on that day to keep off the Persians from the assault, but the armies could not be controlled; they shouted in their jargons, and raised their voices; but Khodawend prevented his Arabs from attacking with the Persians. Prince Aswad came forth, and also Rebia

and Hadifah, and they stood just without the scene of battle, enjoying the spectacle of the contest between the Absians and Persians. The universe was in convulsions. The sun, with the violence of the dust, was veiled; the earth shook; lives were plundered; men were bewildered; swords clashed; the senses fled; blood flowed; the land was in tumults; the dust rose in clouds; the dead were trampled on with fury; the brave advanced, the cowards shrunk away. Antar and Maadi exhibited all their powers on that day. Khodawend was amazed. And they continued in that perilous confusion till the day fled, and the night came on in obscurity. The whole country was crammed with the dead. The armies of Khodawend alighted at their tents, whilst Antar and Maadi Kereb returned in front of their troops, resembling the flowers of the Judas tree, so smeared were they with the blood of the horsemen. They remained on guard till daylight, when the armies drew up for the battle and the contest. The Absians stood forth, and in front were Antar and Maadi Kereb like the lions of the waste. Khodawend commanded the Persians to make the attack against the Absians. Instantly the complexion of the beautiful changed; the cries were incessant; the gates of success were closed upon the Persians; the battle raged; shouts were vehement. The coward thought of his life, and screamed. Skulls were chopped off by the sword; the king of death was eager in the pursuit of souls; energy was

excited; all sport was at an end. The horses were drenched in perspiration; great was the agitation; heads were smote and were cleft in twain. The stumbling and slipping were universal; swords and shields were shattered; hands and necks were clipped off; spears dashed through the eyes; and the heart of Amarah burst.

CHAPTER XXIII.

This day is thus described:

"A day alone in the revolutions of time to be recorded in the tales of the historian. Wars commenced, and every evil fell upon the Persian and the Arab. The army of Persia came with their horses, and the troops filled the whole country to destroy the Arabs, and all the inhabitants of the barren wastes. The Absians, and the armies of the conquering Zebeedians, met them. The horses of death rushed among them, and the herald of fate vociferated aloud. Dust rose upon every side; and the brave heroes vanished from the contest. The lightning of the scimitars flashed like the stars in the obscurity of night. The blows of the sword were heard like thunder roaring in the rolling clouds. The thrust of the spear rent open every bosom, and wrenched out the eyes. The knights bellowed in the contest like the lions of the deserts. They galloped over the plain, and exhibited their enmity to their foes. The youths of war raved in the battle—men, endued with every martial quality. They rejoiced in hearing the sounds issuing from the stringed instruments of the combatants. Brides seemed to

" stand among them, sparkling with every exquisite
" beauty: as their forms appeared brilliant before
" the combatants, heads flew off as offerings, and
" the men were hacked to pieces by the overwhelm-
" ing spear. The blades and lances played a tune,
" and the dancers moved to the clash of the edged
" sword. They were delighted in listening with ec-
" stasy. They danced, and could not be quiet. The
" cups of death passed round with wine of the liquor
" of perils: it intoxicated them, and carried them
" off speedily; and whilst they were singing they
" were dispersed. The falchions clashed, and again
" they returned to the destruction of dearly-prized
" lives. Where they fought, there fell the requisite
" punishments upon them for drinking the prohibited
" draught. He who could see them fell, or was
" trampled under the noble steeds. He who could
" see them threw himself dismounted on the ground,
" and there sought the plains and the deserts. Of
" one were the limbs hewn off; of another was
" pierced the heart with the thrust of the spear.
" They remained with their faces upon the earth,
" and they drank of the wine of perdition. The
" ravens made their complaints among them, as the
" owl mourns in its notes. The horses of death
" were eager among them, and the carcasses of the
" Persians were crushed under them. They were
" exhausted with the contest, and the horses of death
" galloped over them."

Thus they continued to fight, and thus were they

annihilated in battle. The two armies continued the contest of blows and thrusts till the day closed, when they separated; the whole country being filled with the dead. But, on the return of dawn, they again started for the combat, and the hundreds and thousands being drawn up, and the ranks being arranged, Antar stood forth, and appeared on the back of Abjer, and he was like a strong tower, or a block of iron. King Zoheir, and his sons; and the other horsemen and troops followed him; his father Shedad, and the family of Carad, preceding him. The tribe of Ghiftan thundered behind, and then came all the warriors and knights. O Aboolfawaris, said King Zoheir, numbers and an immense multitude oppose us! What say you? O King, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab, I will verily show you this day a battle and a contest future ages shall record. I will exterminate the boldest of these heroes. And Antar began to encourage his heart with these verses:

"I am the Absian, the slayer of cowards. In war "is the time of my glory. I remember my Ibla in "the hour of battle, and love of her inspires my "heart. I have assaulted the foe with the chest of "my charger in the day of battle, at the hour of "the concussion of multitudes. I have broken down "their tribes with the edge of my sword, and their "blood has flowed like pouring clouds. Never have "I turned away the chest of my steed from them. "My dependance is on Ibla, and my noble passion.

"I said to her, turn thee away, and depart, for the "destruction of troops is my duty. When the "movers of terror come down upon us, and the ar- "mies assail in quest of death, and the troops of "Arabia and Persia crowd round the great King, "it is then my noble steed with its hoof of rock "drives against them; and his rider is a youth of "the race of Abs, whose father and mother are de- "scended from Ham. The horse rush upon the "stern intrepid warriors, the harbingers of terror, "like male ostriches; in their hands are Indian "blades and spears: then bursts forth a blaze of "light, and it is the lightning flash in the thunder "cloud. They press on, they present the dreadful "combat; and then glows a flame like a burning "fire. I have slain Wirdishan, and he was a stout "warrior, bold in the encounter on the day of as- "sault. I have left his women to mourn him in "misery, and he is weltering in blood on the plain. "This day too will I slay the son of Chosroe, and "with him Aswad, thou son of a coward. I am "Antar, and my reputation is known far and wide, "as I tear open heads with the rage of my scimitar."

When Antar had finished his verses, he rushed upon the Persians, and roared; he assaulted, and with his shouts he made the deserts and the sand-hills rock, and the country trembled at the howl of the ferocious lion. That day Antar rushed upon the Persians, and as he vociferated, the mountains resounded, and hollows re-echoed. The horses

started back in confusion, and hurled their riders off their seats. In fact, the whole country was obscured; and the dust overshadowed the land: men burst down on one another; skulls were hewn off; bowels were wrenched out, spears were shivered, and swords were shattered. Blood deluged; lives were plundered; horsemen conversed in various tongues; darts were sped with rapidity. The noble-born were in their glory; the base retreated; the brave advanced: heads flew off; the dead were tossed about. On that day the very breathing was checked, and the scene exceeded all calculation. They continued to fight and to contend, to thrust and to smite, till God permitted the day to depart, and the night to throw around its veil of obscurity. Then the two armies separated, for they were exhausted with striking and piercing.

The tribe of Abs returned, and Antar at their head, like the flower of the Judas tree, from the blood of the horsemen that streamed down him. King Zoheir, and his sons, and the tribe of Abs in general, could utter no other word but the "Great Antar," and the victory and triumph were attributed to him.

The two armies reposed that night till morning dawned, when the Persians leaped on their horses' backs, and were drawn up in the left, and right, and centre, and flanks. The tribe of Abs also issued from the mountains, and the men hastened to their posts, when lo! Antar burst forth to the contest,

on his horse Abjer, like a savage lion, or a wave of the sea in a tempest. He rushed against the right of the Persians, and overwhelmed it with disgrace and infamy, and again he returned to the plain, when lo! a knight of Dilem came down upon him like a roaring lion; but Antar only said, accursed be your mother and the mothers of all who worship fire! and he struck him on the jugular vein, and separated his head from his shoulders. Again he galloped and charged, demanding an antagonist: a second stood forth, he slew him—a third, he hurled him over—a fourth, he soon despatched—and they continued in this state till the sun being about to set, he turned away from the field of battle, after he had slain about two hundred and fifty horsemen, and taken seventy prisoners: and as he exulted in what he had done, he thus expressed himself:

"When I wish, I steep my lance in the dye of "vermilion; and I overthrow the vehement horse-"men with my spear. I am the son of the noblest "of men to the east or to the west; by my strength "I conquer in battle, and in the attack. I am the "knight of war that never flinches. I hew off the "heads of the armed men, and am filled with glory. "I am a knight whose equal the age will not behold, "unrivalled for my feats, my conquests, and my "liberality. I am the wished-for knight, the shouter, "the vociferator; I am the piercer of the brave in "the day of assault. I am the object of horrors in "every fight: I am the grasper of souls, the dis-

" solver of every enchantment. I am the destroyer
" of heroes in every dust; I am he that makes the
" warriors drink of the poison of serpents: I am
" the knight of knights, my ambition soars on high,
" and it is elevated to the sun of Paradise. O Ibla,
" I am the furious horseman, the vanquisher of the
" powerful, the stern and the intrepid. I swear
" by the procession, by the pillar, by the stone, by
" the temples, and by their supports, and Zemzem,
" that I will raise the war in the field of contention,
" and that I will annihilate heroes, piercing them
" with my tall spear. I will raise the glory of Abs
" above all mankind, by my generosity, by my am-
" bition, and my resolution. When the warriors
" cry out in the battle, who is there? I cry out, I!
" and death is hurled against death. Should the
" circumference of the world assemble against them,
" I would meet it on that day, as if the earth were
" but the circumference of a dirhem. Truly, in the
" battle of bitterness there is a lion of the tribe, and
" when I am engaged, the valour of the most for-
" ward is conspicuous. I am the lion, but I am not to
" be trifled with; I am the sea, but I am not to be
" tasted. I am he who encounters deaths laughing,
" whilst my foe meets me with not even a smile.
" Not every one whom a steed ennobles is a knight;
" not every polished two-edged instrument is a
" scimitar. Rise, my Ibla, and behold thy Antar
" this day—the lion, when all the armed multi-
" tudes rush upon him. O Khodawend, return,

" expose not your life to dangers with the champion " of women, or you will repent. I am Antar the " Absian, the knight of his clan; I destroy in my " assault the pillars of the tribes."

At hearing these verses, the Absians with one acclaim cried out, May God never split your mouth, and may there be never one to harm you! Antar thanked them, and dismounted. They entered the tents, and remained on the watch till next day, when the warriors again mounted. The men were drawn up, and as Khodawend, mounted on his most valuable steed, stood observing the Absians, lo! Antar started forth between the two armies, exclaiming, Where is the combatant? Who is the champion? This day is the day of universal agitation; this is the day for the elevation of funerals! Will no one dare to meet me? Ye caldrons of cowardly Persians! Be not afraid; come forth—one knight to one knight—ten to one—hundred to one—thousand to one: and if you think it but little odds, come all of ye, attack me, that I may encounter ye all with a staff with which I used to tend the he and she camels; and I will disperse ye among the wastes and the sand-hills.

When the Persian army and Khodawend heard Antar's harangue, amazement and terror fell upon them. This, said Khodawend, is the grossest indignity: when lo! one of the priests of fire advanced towards Khodawend, and kissing his hand, O Prince, said he, do not despise this hero, whose intrepidity

is quite proverbial. Take my advice, and rush upon him with all your armies, Persian and Arab, or this swarthy knight will exterminate us all.

Upon this, Khodawend ordered the whole army to attack, and they, after the manner of their forefathers, made the assault as if one man, Arab and Persian, Turcoman and Dilemite. But Antar met them with blows irresistible and infallible, like a voracious lion, when he roars and bellows.

When King Zoheir saw the attack of the armies, and how they surrounded Antar on all sides, he ordered the tribes of Abs, and Kendeh, and Zebeed, to the assault. They altogether made a rush at the Persians, and the ocean of death waved and dashed till the hair on the head, and the locks below the ears turned grey. The valiant heroes fought, the cowards were in dismay and fled; beards were dyed with crimson blood; lords became slaves; and there passed among them what no pen can describe. The supports of life snapped, and were thrown down: the day darkened over them, and blinded them; the heroes roared and bellowed; wrists and heads were hewn off.

Khodawend beheld in the tribe of Abs and its swarthy horsemen a fury of battle he had never observed neither in Arab or Persian. The conflict continued to rage, blood to be spilt, the flame of war to sparkle, and men to slay, till night coming on, the armies separated, and the surface of the land was covered with the dead: for on that day above

ten thousand Persians were killed. Khodawend retired, surrounded by his warriors of Dilem. The tribe of Abs also returned with more than two thousand prisoners. Khodawend ordered his Satraps to take care of the Absian prisoners, amounting to about one thousand. Thus they reposed, anxious for the dawn of day. But Antar on quitting the battle was like the Judas flower; and as the tribe of Abs preceded him, he thus spoke:

"O my Ibla, heed not the calamities of night, "and let not nocturnal disasters afflict thee. Fear "not death, for it is overpowered by the command "of him who ordains every act. By thy life, wert "thou to behold the foes that charge upon me, O "thou essence of loveliness, as they empty their "quivers, and rush on with every lion-hearted, "long-mustachioed warrior, as they rave whilst my "Abjer, in the midst of their hell-flames, outstrips "the winds in the season of the northern blasts; "and as they roll on in waves like the ocean around "me—and as they attack brandishing their spears, "then am I the undaunted lion. I fear them not— "I heed them not—and when thou seest the lightning of death flashing from the blade of my "polished scimitar, and cups of death circling "round from the barb of my well-proportioned "spear, Antar, under the shadow of the dust, will "cleave off the warriors' heads with his sword, and "when the pointed lances goad him, he will fight "on the right and on the left. I am the death

" that overthrows mankind! the rock-ribbed moun-
" tains yield to my impetuosity. Let the Imperials
" come with all their armies, broad-chinned, and
" their mustachioes plucked out, we will charge
" among them with our hard-flanked, high-
" blooded steeds. We will encounter their fronts
" with the thrust whose fall would level the towers
" of mountains. I am Antar, in form like a lion,
" and I dread not the utmost fury of my foes."

As soon as Antar had finished, King Zoheir hastened towards him, and kissed him between the eyes, and thanked him, (for on that day he never expected to see him escape alive from the arrows of the Persians). He afterwards sought his sons, and perceived three of them were wounded, and Warcah's eye had been grazed. Warriors, said Antar, had they not fought with arrows, we would have exterminated their hosts, and we would have left them as a warning to all beholders. When they had secured their prisoners with cords, and brought them into the mountains, By the faith of an Arab, cried Antar, in revenge for Warcah, I will verily take Khodawend's life. To-morrow will I attack him under his banners and his standards, and I will either take him prisoner, or leave him abject and degraded. They retired to their tents and lighted their fires, and the two armies were on the watch.

Khodawend ordered the Satraps to examine the troops, and when it was ascertained that ten thousand had been slain, and two thousand made pri-

soners, his bosom was violently oppressed, and he was in the greatest consternation. The fire is enraged at you all, said he, and you have merited this disgrace. What! has this catastrophe befallen you, you so superior in numbers? By this calculation, had they even amounted to one-fourth of your force, they would not have left one of ye alive. By daylight, the two armies being drawn up in order of battle, a knight came forth from the Persian army like a fragment of a cloud; mounted on a close-haired charger: from his neck hung an Indian sabre, and a thin spear was slung over his shoulders, and he wore a defensive coat of mail, short-sleeved; and he came on in a most impetuous style, till he had reached the middle of the plain, when Maadi Kereb rushed down upon him, and not permitting him even to gallop or charge once, he smote him with his sword, and left him dead. A second started forth, he slew him—a third, he hurled him headlong—a fourth he crippled, and a fifth; he accelerated his departure from the world; and so on, till he had killed fifty horsemen, when the sun inclining to the westward, the two armies separated, and sought their tents, and the picquets protected the sleepers till the day dawned in smiles, and the two armies prepared to renew the fight and the conflict. The ranks were drawn up, and the thousands were disposed opposite each other. When lo! a horseman appeared on a bright roan horse, and sought the contest. Antar stood forth against him,

but Maadi Kereb anticipated him: this knight was the brother of Wirdishan, whom Antar had slain in the valley of Torrents. Ocab saw him, and he went up to Antar; O my lord, said he, this is indeed a mighty Satrap! Maadi Kereb attacked him; they both assaulted and struck; they retired, and they closed, and they continued the combat, till the day closing in, they were about to separate unhurt, after they had fought a battle that would have turned infants grey.

Zerkemal was full of rage in his heart, that he had not accomplished his wish against his foe; and as Maadi Kereb was returning towards the Arab army, the Satrap remained quiet till he had turned his back upon him, when he proved his perfidy, for he shouted and hurled at him a penetrating javelin, convinced it would overthrow him. But Maadi Kereb, hearing his shout, quickly turned his shield over his back, and the javelin fell upon it more fatal than the fall of a thunderbolt; it pierced right through to his body and wounded him. Maadi Kereb fainted and fell on the ground. The Satrap was in the act of dismounting, when lo! a yell struck him like the crushing thunder: he turned behind him to meet the knight, and as he advanced he shouted at him; but the other again roared so that he blinded him; he poured down upon him, and frightened him, and pierced him. The spear stuck in his ribs, he fell to the earth weltering in his blood. This was the swarthy knight—the skilful

combatant—the roaring lion—the captain of knights —the chief Antar, son of Shedad. For when he saw Maadi Kereb thus betrayed, he resolved on punishing the Satrap for his deed. He hastened towards Maadi Kereb, and having extracted the javelin out of his back, he bound up his wound, and placed him on his horse, and gave him over to his companions. It was now dark, and Antar returned to the tents, his grief excessive on account of Maadi Kereb. But as to Khodawend, his rage and indignation increased to such a degree, his passion nearly choked him.

O Prince, said Aswad, this is not the plan by which the government will last long in your hands. The warriors of Hidjaz are at all times of very inferior numbers, but every one of their knights will overthrow a whole tribe; and if you do not permit us to attack them in all directions, we shall never gain our object. I will not attack them, said Khodawend, but with knight to knight, and if you cannot bring me them one after the other, I do not want any assistance of you. All this, said Rebia, proceeds from Antar's good luck, so that at last he will vanquish us.

They reposed till the dawn of day, when the horsemen started on their horses' backs; the chiefs advanced, and Antar stood forth on his horse Abjer like a resolute lion. Shiboob had told him all that had passed between Khodawend and Aswad; for he had insinuated himself among the Persian troops,

and having obtained intelligence, he returned to his brother. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, I will exterminate the tribe of Fazarah, and the armies of Persia, were they as numerous as the sands of the desert, and I will slay that cuckold Aswad, and all his troops with the weight of my scimitar. I will restore Numan to his dominions—I will destroy all the inhabitants of Khorasan: And he hastened away to the plain, King Zoheir and his sons, and his father Shedad, and his uncles, following him, and also the tribe of Ghiftan galloped forwards; the tribe of Abs amounted to five thousand, and the tribe of Ghiftan to three thousand, and the whole of the army consisted of eight thousand, all sturdy lions. But Antar made his well known assault, and poured out his usual roar. The battle began to rage, and blood to be spilt, and men to be slain—and the flame of war to blaze—and the world to be obscured—and heroes to dash against each other—and skulls to be dispersed—and spears to be shivered—and swords to be shattered—and blood to stream in torrents—and lives to be plundered—and fires to burn—and horsemen to pierce—and the brave to be exalted in glory—and the base to retreat—and the Persians to be precipitated—and hands to fly off—and the dead to be kicked about—and the horses to charge in succession—and the enemy to be routed—and on that day the consternation was universal, and the battle put at nought all calculation—the combat was fu-

rious; calamities and misfortunes were innumerable; the easy became difficult. Antar pierced right and left, and filled the land and the sands with carcasses: he drove right through the army, and slew numbers of their heroes, and he never relaxed. King Zoheir also attacked with his sons, and they penetrated through the left. 'Antar's uncles triumphed on the right: thus they continued till night brought on darkness; and as Aswad retired, he took no notice of any one, for he was intent on horrors and vengeance, and so it was also with Khodawend, for he was quite stupefied at the fury of the contest, and he shuddered in terror. As soon as the armies alighted at the tents, they ate their dinner and reposed till day shone.

The first that stood forth in the plain was the knight of the swarthy Abs, and challenged to the combat; but as no one sallied out against him, he rushed upon the Persian right, and hacked among them with his scimitar; he raved, and he issued from the dust, having slain seventy brave horsemen. Again he returned to the conflict and carnage, and assailed the heroes with the thrust of his spear. Come forth, ye caldrons of Khorasan! he cried, aim your swords and your spears at me; and though the horsemen rushed upon him with the utmost impetuosity, he plundered them of their lives, and stretched their carcasses upon the ground; and he ceased not to thrust at them till they all shrunk back, when he rushed against the left,

where fought the Arab tribes. He dealt death and perdition among them, and slew them till the day closed, and he only quitted them after he had assuaged his soul among them; and Shiboob, like an unavoidable calamity, always preceded Antar, the springing lion; but they all returned from the field of battle towards the tents as night was coming on. The two armies reposed, keeping on the watch; but the day dawning, Antar came forth into the plain, and thus spoke:

"Question the mountaineers of me, O Ibla! ask "of them what the Persians have suffered from me. "I have destroyed the multitudes that came upon "me with billows of troops, men and demons. "They wished to devour us, hungry as they were; "but we have glutted them with blows and thrusts. "We have eaten, but they have not eaten; for they "came against us seeking death at our hands. We "have dispersed their troops from the women more "beautiful than seraphs. How many horsemen "have I laid low with my sword, and their hands "were stained, but not with henna! How many "warriors have I abandoned, whose wives must "mourn in tears their dissolution! How many va- "liant heroes have beheld my thrust, and have "cried out, Hold, O son of Shedad! My heart has "been created harder than iron. Mountains may "pass away, but I shall not pass away. I am the "strong bulwark for the race of Abs when their "enemies erect their fortresses. My complexion,

"it is true, resembles the night, but my deeds are "more brilliant than the rays of the sun. Among "the horsemen there is not my equal; how then can "I fear man or demon? My dark complexion is my "parentage; my father and my mother are my sword "and my spear when my genealogy is required."

When Antar had finished his verses, behold Aswad in front of the Arab army ready to attack him; and as they assaulted him, Go to King Zoheir, said Antar to Shiboob, with my compliments: demand of him one hundred horsemen, that with them I may cut down the enemy, and disperse them among the deserts; but let him not stir from the entrance of the valley. Shiboob departed to execute his orders, whilst Antar assaulted the armies: horsemen engaged horsemen; the equals in glory contended; the shouts were dreadful among them; spears laboured against hearts and lives; the blades of the swords clashed; slaughter and wounds were incalculable; exertion was roused, and all jest was at end; the cowards mourned for themselves, and wept; and the eyeballs of those in health sunk deep into their sockets; the brave cried out, Flinch not! Whilst they were in this tumult, behold from the quarter of the desert there appeared a dust, which filled the whole region; the armies stared at it with attentive gaze to discover what it might be: when, lo! it was Aboolfawaris Antar, and in his hand was a prisoner like a camel, and behind him was Shiboob the subtle lion. The horsemen all looked at the

prisoner on whom this infamy had fallen, and behold, it was Prince Aswad; for he was the first that attacked in front of the Arabs, and rushed upon Antar with the view to make him drink of the cup of perdition, but Antar frustrated his intention by his impetuosity, and he assailed him, bearing his shield over his bosom. He hurled him on his back, but the Arabs rushed on, anxious to rescue him; still Antar engaged them till Shiboob returning, he gave him over to him, and he drove him before him till he brought him clear beyond the scene of battle. Antar ordered Shiboob to bind down his arms, and drive him on to the mountains, whilst he himself returned to the havoc and the destruction of heroes.

Maadi Kereb had continued ill with the pain of his wound till this day. He now mounted his steed, and plunged into the dust, exciting his cousins to the contest, and to follow Antar, the son of Shedad.

As to Khodawend, his bosom was stifled, and he said to his satraps, Let not the Persians fight in company with the Arabs. The armies continued to advance and engage, and the sword and spear laboured among them till the day fled. Discomfiture fell on the Arabs, and they returned to their tents, pursued by the thrusts of Antar, for they were indeed annihilated, and their old and young were in amazement. The Absians and the Zebeedians retired, and they had filled the land and the desert with the dead. As Khodawend marked the

catastrophe that had befallen him. Now, indeed, said he, the imperial government is mangled. Now the Persian warriors are disgraced, and after this event I cannot blame Numan who connected himself by marriage with this tribe. O prince, said one of his satraps, attack them with your whole army, so that we may engage them with darts and arrows, and pen them up in the mountains, otherwise they will bring down infamy and disgrace upon us, were we to be assisted even by the whole force of Khorasan. Upon this he ordered his officers to instruct all the warriors on this point, and to direct them to exert their united powers in the battle. Having reposed, they prepared their arms and their weapons, till the morning appearing, they started for the contest and carnage. Khodawend mounted, and he gave a shout that made the deserts ring. They waved on to the right and left, and prostrating themselves before the sun at its rising over the summits of the mountains, they blasphemed the great Creator, and then advanced with their bows and arrows, and unsheathed their polished scimitars. The Absians arose that morning, exulting in their victory which Aboolfawaris Antar had gained for them; they were all ready to mount, and attack with their spears, but Antar prohibited them, saying, O my cousins, this day will not be like other days. Assemble and stand firm at the entrance of the defile, and beware of separation or dispersion, but bear with perseverance the moment of the

onset. Engage them fiercely this day, and be not as they imagine you are, though the Persians drive against your horses, and seek to destroy you. Just then the armies of horsemen rolled upon them like the billows of the ocean, and the commotion was terrific among them. The day became like a night of total darkness; the horsemen were mixed confusedly, singly, and in pairs; the arrows struck the jugular veins of the steeds. (Asmaee reports, I have heard from one of the Arab chiefs in whom confidence may be placed, that this day was such that no one before him or after him ever saw its like, for they fought till their bodies fell dead; the blast of death withered them; the heads of the slain were dispersed.) But Antar having selected one thousand horse, pursued the conflict, and encountered horrors, till he drove away the troops from the Absians, and scattered them among the wilds and the wastes. When he shouted they were dispersed far and wide; and when he attacked they were put to the rout; and thus he continued his dreadful deeds in front of that valiant army till consternation falling upon them all, he dismounted from the back of his horse, and rushed rapidly towards the Arabs with sword and shield. The tyrants of Persia shouted round him, and the whole atmosphere resounded. The scene bade defiance to the description of the most acute. The high-blooded chargers pranced over skulls and necks; the swift-sped darts, and the thin-bladed scimitars and the quivering lances

penetrated through the tribes of Zebeed and Kendeh; and they endured intolerable horrors in the combat with the Persians. They tasted the bitterest draughts; and the swords continued to play till the sun disappearing in the west, and the night coming on with impenetrable obscurity, the armies retired from the field.

On that day the Persians lost twice as many as the Arabs, but still this dimimution was scarcely apparent, so vast was their host. As to the tribe of Kendeh, they were quite cut up, for they were without their chief, and his substitute was obliged to fly; so likewise the tribe of Zebeed, they were not in good spirits on account of the wound of their knight; even Maadi Kereb had determined on flight, fearful of death and perdition. As to Rebia, he was congratulating Hadifah on their victory, saying, If the like of this day occurs again to the Absians, every vestige of them will be eradicated. O Rebia, said Hadifah, they are indeed invincible warriors. Never will they be vanquished whilst this slave remains alive among them.

The tribe of Abs thus returned, but in a most deplorable condition; many of their men were wounded. King Zoheir consulted Antar about entering the mountains, and fighting by their wives and families, but Antar swore he would not move till he had conquered those foul wretches; For if, said he, a thousand horsemen will stand with me I will defend this spot, were even man and demon to

assemble against me. They talked all night, but with the first rays of light the horsemen marched rapidly to the contest. They put on their instruments of war, and made a most formidable attack, at which the mountains resounded. The Arabs attacked; the chief Antar was at their head. They commenced the blow and the thrust; horsemen were slain; flames blazed; the multitudes mixed promiscuously; they fought with sword and spear; anxiety fell upon all; the eyeballs rolled round; in every spot they sought for refuge and retreat; spears scooped out the eyeballs, and the scimitars flew against necks; the sabres of death flashed and sparkled like lightning; sword blades and shields were cleft in pieces. Now, they continued in this frightful state for seven days entire; on the eighth day the Absians were unable to contend in open field, though they engaged still among the sand hills and defiles, and their destruction seemed inevitable. Antar was wounded in three places; still he protected the tribe and repulsed the foe, till afflictions falling heavily upon them, the women screamed, and tears burst from their eyes in copious streams, for the oceans of Persia were rushing upon them from every quarter, whilst Rebia shouted to his Arabs in a voice every one might hear, Eh! come on! he exclaimed. Plunder the goods; capture the damsels, all like rising full moons; cut in pieces that Antar with the edge of the cleaving scimitar; tear his carcass with the barbs of the

quivering spears; and as he cried out, he just turned his head round, and lo! he perceived a cloud of dust encompassing the whole region, approaching swifter than instant death. Rebia was quite confounded at the sight, and said to Hadifah, Doubtless this is the dust of Chosroe, who is coming with all his host, as he has been long without news of his son; the evil destiny of the tribe of Abs is at hand, and every vestige of them will be rooted out. But whilst he endeavoured to ascertain what the dust really meant, it opened, and behold there was a valiant army like the waves of the ocean, headed by King Numan, and by his side rode the Chief Hidjar and Oorwah; and soon after the army galloped forwards, crying out, O by Lakhm, O by Juzam! your misery and destruction are at hand, ye Persians! for King Numan is come. Rebia heard this exclamation; amazement fell upon him; all the joy he felt fled, and misery and grief were let loose upon him. He looked at Hadifah, and he too was in the greatest consternation: They have set at liberty King Numan at last, he cried; and they are come with him to assist the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and I am convinced no one can have released him but the Chief Hidjar. Soon will he reproach us for our conduct towards him; he will indeed requite us, and say to us, As soon as you knew of my confinement and my downfall, you assisted my brother, and you fought against my friends: so now we have nothing for it but to conciliate him as well as we can, or

death and destruction will overwhelm us. Stand off from the contest of blows and thrusts, he added, addressing the Arab tribes, for truly King Numan is arrived; he has been released from fetters and chains; he is come in spite of the power of his enemies and his haters. The Arabs listened to this harângue, and looking at the army that filled the desert, they informed each other of the state of the case, and retired from the combat, crying out to King Numan, O thou triumphant!

But as to the rescue of King Numan, it was effected by Hidjar and Oorwah. As we before mentioned, they travelled with two hundred men till they reached Hirah, when they plunged their swords into the necks of the slaves and the shepherds, who screamed and shouted; upon which sallied forth the horsemen of Khorasân, with the satrap whom Khodawend had left to guard Numan, and with him were one thousand Persians. They commenced the engagement headed by the satrap; but Hidjar encountered him, and heard him muttering in his Persian dialect; he understood him not, neither did he make him any answer, but he pierced him through the chest, and the barb issued sparkling through his back. Oorwah struck the second horseman, and levelled him with the earth. The tribes of Abs and Kendeh shouted out their distinct patronymics as they transfixed the Persians through their chests and their ribs. Hidjar fell impetuously upon them, and destroyed them with

the blows of his sharp scimitar. The riders were hurled off their horses; and the Persians saw the descent of calamities. Their numbers were soon diminished, and their strength and energy failed. A few of them fled; most of them were slain; and Hidjar entered Hirah with his troops, and releasing Numan from captivity, related to him what the tribe of Abs had done for him. Numan thanked Hidjar, as he said to himself, I was persuaded no one would release me but the Absians and Antar. They set at liberty also the thousand horsemen that were imprisoned with him; and on that very day having sent a messenger to his friends, and written letters to his allies, he waited a little to arrange his affairs, rejoicing at his deliverance from bondage; but on the second day by sunrise armies advanced like the rolling ocean, and in an hour more he had an army collected of seven thousand brave horsemen, with whom he instantly departed, traversing the wastes and the deserts, alarmed for the virtuous Absians, till they reached Adja and Selma. And when Numan arrived he had not less than twenty thousand men with him.

We have mentioned the event, and how the Arabs returned to their allegiance. Rebia too advanced towards him, and, kissing the ground, made his excuses; so did Hadifah and the tribe of Fazarah, for they feared some direful misfortune would overtake them.

As to Khodawend, he expected his death, and

retreated from the contest, as soon as he saw what had happened. The Persians, too, being alarmed lest Khodawend should be murdered, surrounded him on all sides through fear of the Arab king, for Khodawend's force was now reduced to fifty thousand worshippers of fire, the remainder having drank of the cups of extinction.

The tribe of Abs issued from the defiles like lions of the den, and in front of them stood Antar, the invincible hero. The Absians looked about in alarm at the horsemen and their numbers, fearful they would want to plunder their property and goods; but King Numan prohibited them from doing so. After this he proceeded to seek Khodawend, accompanied only by Hidjar and Oorwah. Fear not, most revered prince, said he, any hostile movement against you with these nations, for we are indeed the slaves of the imperial government, and the servants of the Persian kings. As to myself, O prince, I cannot see in me that crime that you should seize my person, except indeed my connexion with this Absian tribe; and have you not seen in their contest during these days something to confound mankind? It is on that account I have sought their alliance, for not one of them can be slain without the destruction of a whole body of heroes, and I never intended by means of this tribe to endanger the other tribes of Arabia; but I acted like a provident man, and I had arranged matters in the best manner in my fears for your safety. Your father has

listened to the words of my enemies, and seized me on account of a transaction on which he was misinformed. I have only rescued myself, and am come here, urged by my fears lest the Arabs should harm you, for they are a people that comprehend not the value of kings; but now what is past is past; and the sight of the eye is better than the hearing of the ear. Let your mercy and the mercy of your father be not denied me, for I cannot acknowledge in myself any crime that has merited such severity. Be you reconciled to me, and I will be the protector and defender of your government, otherwise the desert before me is extensive and wide. At any rate I will not separate from you till I have dispersed from you these armies; and I will attend you to your father in the firmest confidence. Khodawend, on hearing this address, meditated, and hung down his head towards the ground in excess of shame, for he was a rare and noble youth, as indeed were all the Chosroes, for they were the monarchs of the world from the beginning of time till now.

Khodawend dismounted, and affairs being amicably arranged, his alarms were converted into security. I will not move, said he to Numan, but with my stirrup against your stirrup; and when I reach my father's presence you shall see what I will do with you and your associates, for I never understood your worth till I felt your power. But I desire of you to bring me Antar here, that I may overwhelm him with my kindnesses and bounty,

and make of him my coat of mail against the calamities of fortune.

Numan turned towards Oorwah, and having informed him of all the circumstances, ordered him to go to Antar, and bring him, with King Zoheir, and all his warriors. Congratulate yourself, O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah; on the most exalted honours, and the highest glory; for Prince Khodawend requests you will attend him. The Absians had restrained themselves from the contest as soon as Numan appeared, and they were in that uncertain state when Oorwah came and announced the event. Praise be to God, said Zoheir, who is the cause of our deliverance from death and destruction! We must now indeed go to Khodawend; perhaps this business may be arranged after all these dissensions, and evil and wickedness vanish. What say you, O Aboolfawaris? O King, said he, to my taste there is nothing more advisable than the slaughter of Khodawend by the sword, and the massacre of all his Persians. However, O King of the time, I will not thwart the general opinion on the subject; and not to distress your royal bosom at such a moment as this, I will reply with obedience and submission.

Then King Zoheir took him and departed, accompanied with his sons, and in all one hundred horsemen, whilst Oorwah, going ahead, related all the circumstances that had passed, and how Numan had been liberated. But Antar went on like one going to give false evidence; and when they reached

the Persian armies, the Satraps and the Dilemites stared at Antar as he burst asunder the troops in front of King Zoheir and his sons; and his spear was slung across his shoulders.

They continued in procession till they came up to Khodawend, when they dismounted and saluted him. Khodawend was astonished at such behaviour. O noble Arabs, said he, reproaches at such a crisis would only produce irritation, and the mention of what is passed would occasion animosities. I have only sent for you, to pardon you the blood of my troops, and to ask also of you a remission for all my past deeds. I accept you as supports and friends; and he ordered his slaves to bring forth some high-mettled steeds, which they soon introduced, with also a great quantity of honorary robes and presents. The flames of their hearts were extinguished, and distresses were cleared away; for the Ruler of the World is awful, and his bounties eagerly desired.

O munificent Prince, said King Zoheir, we are indeed the slaves of your government, now and of old; but when a man sees his disgrace before him, it is incumbent on him to cast it off from his person by the exertions of mind and body.

Khodawend presented Antar his own sword, that was one of the swords of Chosroe, and was worth the capitation-tax of Egypt and Irak, when well cultivated and populous. He ordered him also five high-blooded horses, with housings of gold, and turning towards Numan, he said, Take Antar with

us to our throne; for I wish to satiate myself with looking at him, and hearing his discourse.

Numan expressed his submission, and he was overjoyed at this fortunate event, for he was still afraid of Chosroe, and he wished to take Antar with him to his city. So the business fell out just as he had wished, and before night every thing was peaceably settled; they prepared feasts, and their joy was complete.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NUMAN now exerted himself to liberate Prince Aswad, and when they had released him, he kissed his brother's hand, and apologised for his conduct. Numan also made peace between him and the Absians, and the tribe of Fazarah, and Antar, and also Rebia, and Amarah, saying, O Aboolfawaris, peace between cousins is the best of proceedings; and now nothing remains but to settle your own private affairs. O King, said he, I will not consent to marry the daughter of my uncle till after your own nuptials, no, not till your wishes are accomplished, and your festival completed, and Chosroe be reconciled to you without any ill will. But should not all these events be satisfactorily terminated, I will make his very balcony totter over his head. I will slay all that dwell in Khorasan, and I will make you in his stead king of the age and the time.

Numan expressed his thanks to Antar, and they all remained together three days, but on the fourth day they prepared for departure, when, said Numan to Zoheir, Depart home, and make ready for your daughter's marriage till my messenger arrives. Do you too, said Prince Aswad to Hadifah, go home, and prepare for your sister's marriage.

Khodawend then marched with the armies till they reached Hirah, Antar riding by his side. Numan alighted at his palace, and his family were delighted at seeing him. He gave a magnificent entertainment to Khodawend, who two days after departed for Modayin, and his heart, after all his fears, felt secure.

Now Antar and his companions remained with King Numan fifteen days, but on the sixteenth day came the presents, and valuable goods, and articles beyond all calculation or description. For Khodawend, when he came unto his father, found him in the greatest anxiety for intelligence. Know, O my father, said he, we have injuriously treated King Numan, and we have listened to the suggestions of the treacherous, and rebels, and of his enemies: for his connexion with the Absians was a proceeding highly judicious and commendable; and King Numan is the only one that consults the good of our government, for he has a most correct judgment; and likewise Antar, son of Shedad, whose equal is not to be found: and my desire is, O my father, that you would send him a magnificent honorary robe, if you wish for the stability of the imperial government.

Thus he informed him of all the circumstances of the battles. Mubidan also seconded him in this affair, for he loved King Numan. So Khodawend did not cease importuning his father till the business was settled; and being pacified, though at first he

was vehemently enraged, he sent the articles by Mubidan, who repaired to Numan, who met him with all his warriors, and prayed for the imperial government: he detained him seven days at Hirah. The greatest part of the presents were for Antar, and also for Oorwah and Hidjar; and when all these favours flowed upon Numan, he felt secure, great as had been his former fears.

Antar soon after asked permission to return home. O Aboolfawaris, said Numan, your departure from me is like the separation of father and son: but I cannot detain you from home on account of your love for Ibla. So he granted him leave to go, after he had conferred on him presents no words can describe.

Antar set out with his companions, seeking the land of Hidjaz; and they continued their journey till they reached the first country of Hidjaz, where they halted for the night, at a water called Kywam. And though Antar was desirous of taking the night-watch, Oorwah would not let him. O Aboolfawaris, said he, I will take that duty from you to-night in this desert. Antar assented, and Oorwah having selected five of his own horsemen, marched out when it was quite dark. They roamed to some distance in the wastes, and went their rounds till the night was quiet, and all was in repose: and as the fresh breezes blew upon them, drowsiness overpowered their senses. They all fell asleep, and not one of them wagged his head till day dawned and

shone, when they returned to their companions, and roused them from their slumbers. They arose, and prepared for departure, but they could not find a single horse. Alas! alas! exclaimed Antar, we have been surprised in the obscurity of the night, and have been robbed of our horses: he questioned Oorwah about what had happened to him during the night; but Oorwah was confounded, and hung his head down to the ground through exceeding shame. O, said Antar, this affair would not even disconcert a woman; and I feel perfectly easy and unconcerned about finding my horse Abjer. So he turned to his brother Jareer; Hie thee away into this barren wild, son of my mother, said he; and return not till you have discovered their track, and if in your way you chance to meet some Arab horde, ask them for a horse for me, that I may mount—(Shiboob was absent when this event occurred, for Antar had sent him home with the women, and gave him charge of Ibla, being alarmed about her on account of that vile family of Zeead).

As Jareer was about to follow the track, the neigh of Abjer was heard, in his movements outstripping the northern blast. As soon as Antar saw him, he was delighted, and cried out, What joy! He shouted towards him, and he replied with a neigh, gratified at his master's voice. Immediately he fastened the housings on him and mounted, saying to Oorwah, Do you and your men mount on these camels, and drive on till we have developed

this affair. And they travelled on till the heat exhausted them, and the desert seemed on fire. Antar was about to halt, when lo! a man on foot appeared from the midst of the defiles, speeding away like a cloud in a storm, although both his hands were tied; about his neck was a long rope, and behind galloped a troop of twenty horse, and he appeared bewildered, like one afflicted with a sudden calamity.

When Antar perceived the man on foot bounding along like a fawn, he bent his course towards him. Come, come to me, O Aboolfawaris, exclaimed the unhappy wretch, I am your brother Shiboob, and what has happened to me would even melt the stoutest heart.

At this Antar's heart quaked; he was greatly agitated, and his two eyes appeared like horse-leeches, till he came up with him. He instantly loosened the cords, and untied the rope about his neck. O my brother, he cried, no Arab shall ever live to enslave thee. Nothing of that has happened, said Shiboob; but both your story and mine are very extraordinary. Thank God, who has sent you to this spot, or I and Harith, King Zoheir's son, must have drank of the cup of death; for he is a prisoner too, and I am dreadfully alarmed about him. I have left him with the companions of these horsemen, but I cannot possibly tell you any thing till I am perfectly convinced of security.

Antar was confounded, and turning his eyes at

the advancing horsemen, he gave a shout at them. He attacked them like a lion, and pierced them with his spear: he soon laid low sixteen of them, and the other four escaped by the speed of their horses. He returned, and asked Shiboob what it was all about. My narrative will be very long, said Shiboob, if you do not first tell me who is with you in this country. Son of my mother, said Antar, Oorwah and his men are with me. So he informed him of all that had occurred; how they had quitted King Numan, and had come down to this spot, and how their horses had been stolen. Son of my mother, said Shiboob, this circumstance of the robbery of your horses has been the means of our salvation; for the fellows that stole them are forty thieves who followed you from the land of Irak, and their chief is the nuisance of the Arabs; he is quite an insufferable fellow. I could recognise him amongst the whole race of man; he is called Awis, son of Saala, the robber. This morning the tribe of Zohran, with whom I have been a prisoner, encountered them: they slew thirty of them, the remainder fled; and whilst the tribe was occupied with them, I ran away into this desert, till you came up to my assistance. Now, as to the robbers, they had followed Antar and his comrades from the land of Irak; and when Antar was returning with all that wealth, Awis, son of Saala, happening to have a glimpse of it, assembled forty robbers. Well! said he to them, if you are indeed desirous of wealth, and the accomplishment

of your wishes, let us follow this black slave; let us expose our lives against him, and let us exert ourselves to obtain this vast property.

That night therefore Awis approached with his associates. How long, said he, must we be traversing these wastes? we cannot bother ourselves any longer. Upon that one of them advanced towards Antar and his companions, and found them all asleep. Much pleased at this, he returned to give information to Awis. My opinion, said he, is, we should content ourselves with their horses, and leave their men alone, and not bring a war dust upon us. They all agreed to his advice, and finding the horses grazing, they mounted some, and drove away the others; but they had not quitted the desert ere daylight shone, when Abjer, not knowing these fellows, and missing his master, burst loose from the person who led him, and galloped over the plain; the men hastened after him till he came nigh unto Antar.

My brother, said Shiboob, it would be well to let Abjer rest a little till Oorwah and his men come up here, that they may mount these horses that we have gained, for the enemy will of course follow me over the desert. Antar approved of the plan, and he let Abjer graze in the desert, and as he was quite amazed at Shiboob's narrative, he directed him to state how he and Harith were made prisoners. Theirs was a wonderful adventure; for when the Absians returned home, they waited in expectation

of Antar's joining them from the country of King Numan, and a great dread of the tribe of Abs had made its way into the hearts of the Arabs. Now it happened that one day Prince Harith went out to the chase, and with him a party of Absians. They had wandered away to some distance from the land of Shurebah in search of game. And as they roamed about the wastes and wilds, east and west, they came to a valley called the valley of Sandhills, where they beheld a large party of the tribe of Zohran. Harith questioned a slave; My lord, said he, we are of the tribe of Zohran, and our chief is Bekir, son of Moatemid, and whilst Harith was in conversation with the slave, a fawn fled away before him. Harith called out to his horse, and he made towards it; but having missed it, he passed by a lake where there was a party of the Zohran women. Now the cause of their removal from home was this. This chief Bekir had a daughter called Labna, and she was more beautiful and lovely than the full moon; her suitors were numerous, and many demanded her of her father, but he would not bestow her on any one. She had a cousin, who was Jareer, son of Cadim. Labna detested him on account of his harsh manners, although he was brave in the field. He demanded her of her father, but he refused; and there arose such an hostility between them, that their removal was absolutely necessary. So they traversed the wilds and the deserts till they reached the land of the tribe of Abs

and Adnan, and asked the protection of King Zoheir, which he readily granted. The damsel Labna, on the day Harith passed by the lake, was in company with her maidens. Harith beheld her, and became enamoured; and she likewise saw him, and all her limbs were in a tremor, and her agitation was great. So she addressed her maidens to take off their attention, exclaiming in verse:

"O truly mine eye has had a glance of the "youth who has passed me, employed in the chase "of the fawns;—he is gone, but his charms have "captivated my heart;—he is gone, and my heart "still burns the more."

When Harith heard this, he looked behind him, and love for her took possession of his whole frame. His companions, as soon as they perceived how he was affected, checked him: O Prince, said they, we observe you are discomposed and dejected. Yes, said he, I wish to return home; and when he reached his dwelling, his mother came to him and said, My son, what has distressed you? I went to bed last night, said he, a little indisposed, and what is come to me no one but the Searcher of all secrets knows. But when his mother had quitted him, he sent for his nurse, and informed her of his situation. She listened, and promising to assist him in his troubles, she set out for the valley of Sandhills, where she saw the tents, and introducing herself among the women, she feigned being on a visit to them. At length she came up to Labna, and addressing her,

acquainted her with the state of Harith. She started up on hearing this, and also imparted her situation to the nurse, who said, I wish you would come to-morrow night to the lake. Labna expressed her thanks, and the old woman departed home to Harith, who was most anxiously expecting her. She informed him all about Labna, and the love she felt for him. This relieved Harith's anguish, and at the close of the day he took the old woman with him and set out; and when they reached the valley, he secreted himself among the Erak * trees. Labna too waited till evening, and then with one of her maidens went away to the lake, where she found Harith, and threw herself into his arms. They remained till daylight, and this became the spot of their future assignations, till one day he happened to ride out towards the valley of Sandhills, but he perceived no vestige of the tribe. In the greatest agitation and astonishment he returned home, and he became like a living corpse. The cause of this removal was a messenger, who came to them from their chief, reproaching them for their migration, and he was called As-hath, son of Dharnah. Not being aware of their total removal from their country, he waited for some time till he heard they had gone down to the tribe of Abs and Adnan. So he sent after them, saying, As to Jareer, son of Cadim, I have seized his person on

* Trees, with the leaves of which they feed camels.

BRANCH OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY

your account, and I desire you will return to your native land.

Labna's father, hearing this message, was delighted to revisit his home, and his rage was quenched. But when their departure was ascertained by Harith, he informed Shiboob of all that had happened, and of his present situation. Shiboob pitied him. They waited till it was dark; Harith saddled his horse, and enveloped himself in his armour and rich corslet, according to his custom. Shiboob too grasped his bow and quiver, and filled his portmanteau with arrows, and they both set out for the land of the tribe of Zohran; and on their arrival, said Shiboob to Harith, Do you lie concealed here. But he himself departed for the tents, clothed like a poor infirm beggar; and he disguised his designs very cunningly till reaching the tent of Labna's father, O mistress! he exclaimed to an old woman, have you any victuals? Yes; wait for me a little, said she. She came out and said, Here, take these bean-shells, you famished fellow, and pray to the mistress of joys for a happy meeting of lovers; perhaps your prayers may be accepted. Are you a stranger in this land? said Shiboob. No, said she; but my mistress has a lover with the tribe of Abs, and she is out of all patience on his account. Is it not Harith, son of King Zoheir? said Shiboob. Yes, answered she, and I see you know him. Yes, he returned, for he is my master; so he told her all the story, and of Harith's arrival. Let him stay

where he is, said she, for her father has resolved on marrying her to Kheitaoor, who has even sent the whole of the marriage dower to her father, and there are only three days now to the wedding. The maid ran to Labna in haste, and told her of her conversation. Return, said she, and tell him to go back to his master; assure him that I will join him, and that he must take me away with him. She arose as soon as it was dark, and all the family were asleep, and went to Shiboob, taking her she-camel with her, on which he loaded all she possessed. Lead this camel, said she, and go with it to your master. Away went Shiboob, and Labna followed him till they met Harith. Come with me, cried Shiboob to them. Labna mounted her camel, and Harith his horse, whilst Shiboob held the camel's bridle, and they set out traversing the wastes.

But Labna's father and mother, when morning dawned, sought for Labna, but she was not to be found. They raised a hue and cry, and informed Kheitaoor, who mounted with a party of his warriors, and questioned Labna's father about the circumstance. My lord, said he, I heard on my return from the tribe of Abs, that Harith, the son of King Zoheir, was in love with her, and he must have carried her off. By the faith of an Arab, cried Kheitaoor, I will overtake him by sunrise, and will slay Harith and all the tribe of Abs. Having stationed some troops in different places, he himself set out with five hundred stout horsemen.

But as to Shiboob, and Harith, and Labna, they travelled under the veil of the night till morning dawned in smiles, when they reached the vale of Fawns and the mountain of precipices; this was a lofty mountain, and perfectly inaccessible but by one road. Arrived at the meadow beneath, they were desirous of alighting near it, when lo! ten slaves came towards them from the mountain's side, shouting and running impetuously. In front of them was a black slave like a lion. These slaves had occupied this mountain as a refuge and a safe retreat in their escapes after the perpetration of murders; and when they were hard pressed they climbed up the mountain, and defended themselves on its summits. Their chief was called Habis, and as soon as they saw Shiboob, and Labna, and Harith, they made at them, calculating that the horseman would escape by flight; that they should put the man on foot to death, seize the camels, and enjoy the damsel. But they knew not that this man on foot was a blaze of fire and a crashing thunderbolt: for as soon as Shiboob perceived them hastening from the mountain top, he met them resolutely, and smôte their chief with an arrow on the chest, forcing it out quivering through his back. The slaves, seeing their chief dead, shouted at Shiboob, and all their wrath was excited against him. Harith galloped after him to assist him, but an arrow fell on the chest of his horse, and down he fell. Harith instantly sprung on his feet and

exerted himself to the utmost behind Shiboob on foot, whilst Shiboob practised all his arts, hurling them over with his arrows, and slaying them one after the other till six of them were killed, and only four survived. They made bitter reflections to themselves. I cannot think this can be a mortal man, said one, he must be indeed a devil, and he dwells hereabouts; for our chief used often to say he had seen a ghoul in the plain, and we ever bantered him about it. Talk not now of that, said another, let us escape in haste to the top of the mountain, and they fled; but they soon perceived that Shiboob had arrived before them at the head of the pass: Ye dastardly Arabs, he cried out, whither would ye fly? Your death is at hand. The first he struck down with an arrow on the chest, and it issued out through his back: he came up with a second, rushed upon him, and smote him with his dagger through the heart, and laid him prostrate; but the other two fled over the barren waste: so Shiboob returned to Harith, who thanked him for his exertions. O Ebe-reah, said he, I am now left on foot in this desert; and the way is long.

They were thus conversing together, when lo! a troop of horsemen appeared, headed by Kheitaoor, and he was like a tower or a fragment rent from the mountain's side, and Labna's father was riding by his side. When Labna saw this, she was in despair. Here then is certain death, said Harith, and we have no other resource but this mountain where

these slaves retired; for if we were at its summit, we should be secure. And I, said Shiboob, will empty my quiver before me, and will show you a little of my skill, and I will defend you against the inhabitants of the whole world, wide and long as it is. I will disperse this party over the sand-hills. Let us only ask for succour from the Lord of the Fountain Zemzem, and the Shrine. Do as you please, said Harith, but how shall we ascend this mountain? and will not our fears and terrors enfeeble our exertions? Be sure of success, said Shiboob, and he went up to Labna and took her upon his shoulders, and went off with her on foot, till he reached the skirt of the mountain, whence he clambered up with her till he was on the heights. Harith followed him.

But when Labna's father and his party saw that Shiboob was like a bird, they were amazed, for he ascended the mountain till he approached the summit. The party in pursuit overtook Harith on the mountain's skirts, for he was weighed down by his armour. He defended himself, and exhibited his prowess till numbers thronged upon him, so they took him prisoner, and Shiboob was in the deepest affliction. The troops alighted in the meadow under the mountain, and afterwards rushed one after the other to ascend, in order to accomplish their hopes with respect to Labna and Shiboob. But Shiboob overthrew them with his arrows till darkness came on, when they returned, thwarted in

all their attempts, many of them wounded. Upon this Kheitaoor and Labna's father halted, in the greatest alarm at Shiboob's arrows. We are indeed quite nonplused by this devil, said Kheitaoor, all we have for it is by daybreak to seize hold of Harith and prepare for hanging and torturing him; and we will say to Shiboob, if you do not surrender our daughter to us, we will hang Harith, and make his dwelling in the tomb. Here we will besiege you till we catch you, and we will take your life from between your sides. So they bound Harith fast, and stationed over him two black slaves.

Harith laid himself down, suffering the acutest grief and affliction. But Shiboob returned to Labna and comforted her heart, vowing to her he would ransom him with his own existence; and he remained quiet, till being convinced that the influence of sleep prevailed over the party below, he descended, sliding down on his back till he was at the bottom of the heights, where, having recourse to his stratagems, he made a minute scrutiny right and left, and at last, perceiving the slaves were asleep, he approached them and despatched them all. Continuing the enterprise on which he was bound, he crawled along on his hands and feet till he entered the tents, where he heard Harith thus speaking:

"O my tribe, the fetters of captivity have bound "me fast; there is no escape for me from these gall- "ing chains. They pounced down on me early in "the morning, or their thin blades would soon have

" despoiled my life. O my cousins, I had not con-
" gratulated myself on a day's meeting, when se-
" paration befel me. Fortune has overthrown me
" with a deadly arrow, and for its sting there is
" no panacea. O my cousins, seek to revenge me
" when I am gone, where the high-spirited steeds
" charge. Tell Antar, the son of Shedad, that I
" cannot escape from their hell-flames; he will be
" a match for the foe with his irresistible sword, to
" him all lovers weep their sorrows. Alas! for
" Labna! what anguish must she endure in my ab-
" sence when separation shall afflict her! I ima-
" gined we should all live happily together in se-
" curity, and all our flames would be quenched.
" But Fortune has tormented us with separation;
" there is no faith, no covenant with Fortune."

When Shiboob heard these verses repeated by Harith, he knew that he felt assured of death and perdition; his heart grieved for him; he advanced towards him—he found him tied down—the slaves about him were asleep—he came closer—he rent the fetters from his feet, and cut away the handcuffs—he calmed his apprehensions. Follow me, said he, and do as I do; and he went crawling along on his hands and feet: they continued stepping over the fellows asleep, till they were beyond the tents, and then they pursued their way in the greatest haste till they reached the summit of the mountain. As soon as Labna saw Shiboob and Harith with him, she was delighted at his contrivance. Shiboob took out

some victuals, and they reposed in comfort and happiness till the day dawned, when Kheitaoor starting up from his pillow, sought Harith, but he could not find him; he only saw the handcuffs cut away, and the slaves murdered and lying dead on the ground. Eh! ye wretches, he cried to his people, behold the prisoner was fast bound, and a single person has released him from the midst of ye, and yesterday he destroyed your bravest warriors; how will you now defend yourselves or your chief? This is all your doing, and he resolved on putting to death the other guards; but Labna's father prevented him. These men are not to blame in this business, said he; we were in fault, that we did not station a guard over the mountain's side. We shall never succeed in seizing him, if we do not all mount against him, and slay this devil, for he has already killed fifty of our men, and we shall be a disgrace to the end of time. They set out with the whole party, who were ordered to ascend the mountain; they accordingly began to climb, shouting, but alarmed. When Shiboob saw this, he emptied his quiver before him, and strung his bow; he bent down on one knee, and shot his arrows against their chests and their necks; the men fell down like leaves. Harith quitted Labna, and threw immense stones down upon them from the top of the precipice; in a short time fifty were killed. So Kheitaoor retired in despair and disgrace, writhing in agonies of terror. The tribe of Zohran, he exclaimed, is

rendered infamous among the Arabs. By the faith of an Arab, were I to encounter a thousand horsemen in the field, it would be an easier task for me than this devil. And he turned towards the warriors, and told them they must struggle in the contest. They continued in this state till darkness came on.

On that day all Shiboob's arrows were expended by the number he had shot, and the men and chiefs he had slain. Kheitaoor stationed ten horsemen on the skirt of the mountain, whom he ordered to lie concealed among the rocks, saying in the height of his passion, Whoever shall sleep, him will I destroy. I will be near you, for I am convinced that this devil has expended all his arrows: however, he will not abandon his design; he will therefore come down this night against you when the people are asleep, and will steal away your arrows. I expect therefore you will watch him till he descends, then seize him. But beware, should he escape from you, I will strike off all your heads; for in his speed he will outstrip the winds, and I have not a horse that could overtake him.

Thus he stationed the men, and enjoined them to be on their guard. As to Shiboob, he was all anxiety till night came on in obscurity, when he started on his legs, and hastened down the mountain till he reached the bottom of the heights; but he had scarcely recovered his breath, when the men sprung upon him, and surrounded him on all sides.

He rushed against them like a lion when he terrifies, and in his hand he held his dagger; and though he slew numbers of them, they at length took him prisoner.

The intelligence soon reached Kheitaoor: the whole party arose and struck lights. Thou art fallen at last, thou devil, said Kheitaoor: and having ordered his shoulders to be tied well down, Labna's father and the rest started away for the mountain.

Harith saw all this, and he was convinced of disgrace and misery. He immediately drew his sword out of the sheath, and fought as long as he had powers and strength, till he had slain ten slaves, and brought down perdition upon them, and also two of the Arab chiefs. At length numbers overpowered him, and they took him prisoner, and they bound him miserable and dejected. Bekir advanced towards his daughter, who was trembling like a reed; he dragged her by the hair to the bottom of the heights, and would have slain her, had not Kheitaoor prevented him.

They halted in that place till day dawned, when they lashed Harith to the back of a horse, and fastened a long rope round Shiboob's neck, and stationed a slave over him to haul him along. He endured it all very patiently, till coming close to him, he gave him a kick on the stomach, and dashed out his bowels. He darted forth into the deserts, and they all endeavoured to gallop after him in a

body, till the robbers rushed upon them from the barren waste, and with them Antar's horses. Having slain them and carried away their horses, Kheitaoor and his companions returned in pursuit of Shiboob till they met Antar. As soon as Kheitaoor's eyes fell on Antar, he attacked him; galloping and charging he sought the contest, and thus addressed him:

"Lord of the noble black steed, and the sword, "and the penetrating spear, if you indeed succeed "in destroying any of our horsemen, fortune must "have betrayed the invincible lion. When she "offers a slave the cup of sweetness, she errs, in "giving him to drink any thing but coloquintida. "Tell me what you have seen; and know that "mine is a never-failing scimitar in the revolutions "of fortune. In every land I have left for the wild "beasts and the birds a sea of blood shed by my "sword. When I am present in the fight on the "day of battle I exterminate every lion-warrior; "when I even retreat the foe trembles in horror; "and you might see the whole earth in the circum-"ference of a dirhem. So have recourse to some "subterfuge that you may escape by it, for apolo-"gies cancel even the most heinous offences."

Antar heard Kheitaoor's address, and laughed exceedingly, and thus replied in verse:

"Verily I say I will slay your horsemen, and I "will leave their flesh as carrion for wild beasts, "for my spear indeed complains of the inconve-

" nience of thirst; but now I have met a day when " it shall be moistened with blood. What! have " you not known my power? truly, the warriors of " all the cities of Persia confess it; and the heroes " of war on the day of battle die at the mention of " my intrepidity and liberality. When I lose my " way over the desert in my nocturnal solitude, my " only company is my sword, resembling inevitable " fate. It is never drawn but on its separation " from the sheath a sea of blood gushes from its " edge. My piebald steed has a white crescent on " its forehead, like the dawn of day, and its black " is like the sable raven. These two are my sup- " port on the day of contention; and the barb of " my spear sparkles like a speckled serpent. How " many heroes have I abandoned as food for the " wild beasts and every ravenous lion."

Antar had not finished his verses when he rushed upon Kheitaoor, and frightened him; he shouted at him, and made him tremble; he pierced him with his spear between the paps, and drove it out through his back, and Kheitaoor fell dead weltering in his blood. When his companions perceived what calamity had overtaken him, they rushed on from all sides; Antar met them with a frightful assault, and laboured among them like a blazing fire. In an hour forty of them were slain, the remainder fled and sought Labna's father. But Antar returned like a raving lion to his brother Shiboob, and his object was accomplished upon his enemies.

Just at that time came up Oorwah and his men. They were greatly surprised at seeing the scattered horses of the enemy, and were exceedingly rejoiced. O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah to Antar, whence are these horses you have obtained? Antar related the adventures of Shiboob and Prince Harith's captivity. On hearing this they alighted from their camels' backs, and having mounted the high-blooded horses, they went up to Shiboob, and saluted him.

But as to the fugitives, they continued to flee away over the desert from Antar till they reached Beker, son of Moatemed, to whom they announced Kheitaoor's death, detailing every circumstance, and the destruction made among the horsemen. Eh! and who, said he, is the warrior; who is the dreadful lion that has slain him? A black knight, said they, mounted on a black steed, as if hewn out of a black rock, and in his hand is an Indian blade; and we heard him, as he fought among the horses, crying out, Ye base cowards, I am Antar, the son of Shedad. May God curse your fathers above all men! exclaimed Labna's father. What! has all this happened to you by a single knight, and he a black slave, powerless and insignificant? Know, said one of them, that this is the knight whom horsemen have described as overthrowing alone a thousand warriors in the plain, vanquishing them by his intrepidity and superiority. Labna's father shuddered. What sayst thou? he cried. Who ever be-

held a single horseman attack a numerous host? Return with me, and I will show thee what I will do. Mount these steeds, he cried to his horsemen, and make towards this slave with your scimitars and your spears.

And they put their horses on their speed, and followed him, when behold, the dust of the Absians sprung up, and their shouts arose, and they advanced like fate and destiny. It is my opinion, said one called Jifal to Labna's father, that you should let me pass over the desert, taking ten horsemen with me, that I may bear away Harith and your daughter, and convey them home; and do you attack Antar with the remainder. Take as many men as you please with you, said the other.

On that Jifal returned, and with ten horsemen departed, travelling on till they reached the place where they had left Harith and Labna; but they could see nothing of them, and no appearance of their track. We are indeed disappointed in our pursuit, said Jifal, and Labna has escaped us.

They passed on, when lo! shouts arose in their rear. They turned about to see the cause of this uproar, and behold their own horsemen and Arabs, all seeking flight, pursued by the tribe of Abs and Adnan. Jifal struck his horse's rump, and fled towards his own country, followed by his companions. The fugitives were scattered in tens and twenties, and they continued in this state till night advanced,

when Antar coming up with the Absians, What think you of this affair? said he to Oorwah; we have routed the foe, and have succeeded in our attempts; but we have not released either Harith or Labna, and I am afraid they have carried them away, and have sought their own country, and if Harith should be delivered to As-hath, the business will become desperate, and he will be put to death for Kheitaoor: Shiboob indeed is gone on before us, and till he returns this is a serious affair; for if I pursue these fellows till I destroy them, I shall be separated from my brother Shiboob; and if I stay here till I have some intelligence of him, I fear Harith will be exposed to peril, and every vestige of him erased.

Whilst they were thus conversing, they heard some men shouting from the mountain, and saying, Come hither, O Aboolfawaris, for we have found Harith, and he is indeed despairing of life. Antar, on hearing this, took Oorwah with him, and having ascended the mountain, Antar called out to Harith, who opened his eyes, and mourned his sad state, relating what had happened to him. The cause of it was this: when the fugitives came groaning to Labna's father, and related Kheitaoor's death, Bekir mounted, and sought the contest with his companions, having left his nephew Jireer with Harith and Labna, and two stout slaves. Instantly, Jireer unsheathed his sword, and making at the slaves, smote them with his cleaving scimitar, and slew

them all. He sprung at Harith also, and struck him with his sword, and dreadfully wounded him; and then mounting Labna on one of the fine horses (thinking Harith was dead), he abandoned him, and rode away on his own high-mettled steed, with the design of going with Labna to some of the noble Arab kings, and to defend himself against accidents under his protection. In vain Labna shrieked aloud, and looked about to the right and left, praying for succour.

As to the subtle Shiboob; he set out in quest of Harith, and did not stop his progress till he came to that spot, where he saw no human being, but the slaves murdered. Advancing towards them, he also perceived Harith lying between them, groaning piteously. At this sight Shiboob stood aghast with horror: O my lord, said he, who has done this? Harith's heart was strengthened at seeing Shiboob; so he told him what Jireer, Labna's cousin, had done. Shiboob took him in his arms, and ascending the mountain with him, on the summit he found a ravine, in which he laid him down, placing him in security: Shiboob then questioned Harith about Jireer; What road has he taken? he asked. He directed him to the quarter, and immediately Shiboob left him in the mountain, and let loose his feet, seeking the barren waste, and following the tracks of Jireer. He continued his course till he overtook him by break of day, and heard Labna's screams; she was weeping, and in the greatest affliction.

Shiboob was delighted at seeing them; he hasted towards them, swift as the twinkling of the eye, and smote his horse on a vital part. The horse plunged with him, and threw him on his head. Shiboob sprung upon him, and stamping on his chest, stabbed him with his dagger, scattering wide his entrails, and annihilated his existence.

Labna, in the excess of her terrors, was bewildered; and when Shiboob came up to her, she exclaimed, Who art thou, O Arab? I am Shiboob, said he; and he gave her an account of Harith, and soothed her heart. He returned with her till he joined his brother Antar, whom he found just as he had brought away Harith from the mountain. On seeing Shiboob they were in ecstasies of joy, and grief and sorrow quitted them. Labna ran up to Harith, whose life, as soon as he saw her, returned to him; and thus reunited to her, his happiness was complete, and he forgot in her society all the pain of his wounds.

Antar remained the rest of the day in that spot in security, and by dawn of day he departed with his horsemen, seeking the land of the tribe of Abs and Adnan. But, as his love for Ibla burst upon him, he thus rhapsodised:

"Oh! is it the fragrance of musk? is it *itr** ? is "it a voice, or the breeze warbling over the desert, "that sings of her? Is it a flash of lightning? or

* Oil of roses.

"is if her teeth in the wastes, resembling the full "moon when it rises? Is it the branch of the tama-"risk that sweetly waves in the wilds? Is it the "stem of the spear, or her form? Is it the narcis-"sus of the gardens, endued with visual powers, or "her cheek, like the untouched apple? I rave "through love of her; but let my railers see the "torrents of my tears, to which there is no end! "O Ibla, my heart for love of thee suffers tortures; "this frequent separation, and these echoes, fill me "with grief. O Ibla, fear not thy enemies; for "against the destiny of God there is no oppo-"sition."

When Antar had finished, the horsemen expressed their delight at his prose and verses; they travelled before him, traversing the wastes, till there only remaining one day between them and the land of Abs, Antar sent on Shiboob to give notice to King Zoheir of the safety of his son Harith. Shiboob set out by dawn of day, and about midday he returned. It is impossible that you can have returned, having ever reached home, said Antar. O my brother, said Shiboob, I reached home, and saw all the horsemen dispersed about the country, mounted on their steeds. I inquired what was the matter of one of them, and he informed me that King Zoheir rode out with his son to congratulate and meet his brother Asyed, on his arrival from Mecca on a visit; and we have now heard, he added, that they have been taken captives. On this

account, the horsemen have mounted in order to release them; and he who has plundered them is a notorious knight, and an obstinate warrior, accompanied by a troop of noble horsemen. And hast thou heard, said Antar, in what country they were detained prisoners? Yes, said he; the troop came upon them in the valley of Irak trees. This is a most extraordinary circumstance, said Antar, that our Princes should be taken prisoners, and perdition come upon them. Certainly, no one has ventured on such a deed but one fearless of mankind, and unintimidated at death.

Antar sent Harith and Labna with twenty warriors to the dwellings and homes; but he himself with his men set out for the valley of Irak trees, preceded by Shiboob.

CHAPTER XXV.

When King Zoheir missed his son Harith, he sent out his slaves in every direction, and he remained anxiously expecting their return till the happy tidings of his brother's arrival reached him. Asyed was one of King Jazeema's sons. He was a learned man in that age of ignorance, and he generally passed his time at the sacred shrine and Zemzem. He was full of virtue and liberality, loving justice and equity, and detesting violence and oppression. He every year paid a visit to the tribe of Abs, teaching them the distinctions between right and wrong, and arranging their affairs, and when he arrived this time, he sent forward to King Zoheir to announce his approach. His brother went forth to meet him with three hundred horsemen, all like stern-faced lions, and all his relations and uncles, for King Zoheir was the father of ten, the brother of ten, the paternal uncle of ten, and the maternal uncle of ten. They continued driving away the wild animals over the wastes and the sands till evening came on, when having halted in a valley till day dawned, King Zoheir marched on without any apprehensions, till meeting his brother Asyed in the sandhills of Erak, he and his attendants dismounted and saluted

him. My love and affection for you, said Asyed, have exceedingly distressed me, otherwise I should not have quitted the fountain of Zemzem, and the holy mansion, and the sacred shrine. They proceeded towards the middle of a valley, which was called the valley of Tamarisks. The wild beasts and the deer fled before them. King Zoheir looked about and observed his brother Asyed, who was pointing with his hands towards the trees, and the tears were streaming from his eyes; burning sighs burst from his heart, and as he poured forth the groans of a woman deprived of her children, he thus addressed the trees:

"O trees of the Tamarisks, where do ye behold "them? Do the people of my vows dwell in your "neighbourhood? I look all around, but the hand "of ravage has destroyed them; yet never have I "broken my former protestations, I have not be- "trayed them; my vows were made to one like the "full moon, resembling the branches and boughs "of the Tamarisk,—but I am alone and solitary, "though once we met, and here, now they are gone, "are only the owl and the raven. O trees of the "Tamarisk, whither are they gone? They are "gone, and in my heart passion has left a burning "flame. If ye ever, after being watered, complain "of drought, my tears to-day shall form a lake "around ye."

When Asyed had finished his verses, his sighs became more frequent, his countenance changed, and

his agony increased; his brother advanced towards him, having heard his discourse, and asked what was the matter, but he observed him still pointing to the trees, and thus exclaiming:

"O trees of the Tamarisk, in the name of God, "tell me what ye know, for I am overwhelmed with "inquietude. Pity the tears of a distracted lover, "whose eyes weep over these devastated plains. "The valley is abandoned; but there was an inha- "bitant like the fawn, richly robed. Speak to me "of Selima, of Robab, of Zineb, and those, resem- "bling brides, in the sand-hills. They have aban- "doned me in misery—they are gone, and I weep "over the remains of these desolated scenes. The "raven moans over the vestiges of these spots, "where no more are seen the tents of my mistress "and the horsemen. Take then, ye boughs of the "Tamarisk, my tears, that flowing would moisten "the saturated as well as the parched up soil. Al- "though the covenant between us is dissolved, yet "my love for thee bids me not despair; I live in "hope that God will make us meet in joy, as if we "had never been parted."

King Zoheir was so struck by his grief, that he ran up to his brother Asyed, and interrupted his speech; saying; I cannot permit you to finish these verses, till you inform me what affliction has befallen you. I conjure you, by the sacred shrine, to tell me what this means. O brother, said Asyed, if I tell you my story, you will have an indifferent opinion

of my discretion and honour; but indeed I am not much to blame, as I did it in the days of my youth. Know then, my brother, that the year our father, King Jazeema, made his pilgrimage, I accompanied him, and when our pilgrimage was expired, as we were on our way home, we happened to pass by this place, in which I saw a vast quantity of wild beasts and deer. My father rode on and went home, but I remained for the sake of the chase. Thus occupied, I remained till the meridian heat overpowered me, and the sultry air became so excessive I returned also, seeking the track of my father; but I chanced to pass by this tree, and when I reached it I saw a very old Sheikh beneath it, and with him an immense quantity of camels, and also his daughter, who was tending them at the pasture. She was the most beautiful and most elegant of forms, and as soon as I came up to him I saluted him. What do you want, young man? said he. I only said, Will you accept of a guest when he comes? Welcome, said he, to me, in winter and in summer. But, young man, every one according to his means On hearing this, I resolved on alighting at the lake, in order to drink and water my horse. But the Sheikh prevented me, and called out to his daughter, who brought me some fresh camel's milk and gave me to drink, and also watered my horse. I remarked the beauty of the maiden, and I perceived her moving in the plains of loveliness. Her father, too, observing the symmetry of my horse and my rich gar-

ments, brought me some victuals. Excuse my scanty offering, said he, for I am a poor man, and the liberal pardon when they see the apology is sincere. O Sheikh, said I, this is the greatest charity; but if you will accede to my wishes, I would request you to accept my proposal, and gratify my desire with regard to your daughter, and you shall then go with me to my tribe. I am anxious you would receive me as her husband, and I will take you to my land and family; speak to me and bestow her. By Him who has created her and fashioned her, I added, take all I have about me as part of her marriage dower; and I took off my sword belt and my horse trappings, which were all of gold. The Sheikh at the sight of this was much surprised and delighted, and came towards me without hesitation, and giving me his hand for the marriage, drove away the camels and cattle, and went to his own dwelling, and I accompanied him; and on our arrival he slaughtered all the sheep he possessed and some she camels, and rejoiced in me as no one ever rejoiced before, and married his daughter to me that night. I tarried with them three days, and afterwards I informed them who I was. I staid some time longer, and quitted them, bearing in my heart the greatest attachment for them, and intending to return to them with abundant wealth. Having reached home and joined my family, I despatched a slave to conduct my wife to me, and sent with him a great quantity of camels and sheep to this valley and desert. I re-

mained, anxiously expecting them, till my slave returned in despair, and brought back all my property. I asked him what was the matter? I have seen no one there, my lord, said he. I staid some time quiet, and despatched emissaries to all the Arab tribes, and expended amongst them much gold and silver, but I never could obtain any intelligence of her. And even now, my brother, I bear her in my memory. It was on her account I attached myself to Mecca and the sacred shrine, till I this day beheld these remembrances of her, and now all my sorrows come upon me anew; and whilst I meditated on the past, I was anxious that you should come with me to this spot, that I might renew the vows made so many years ago. King Zoheir, on hearing this narrative, was amazed at the revolutions of the days and nights. He dismounted, and ordered the slaves to clear away that spot, and spread carpets for them under the tamarisk trees, and the horsemen soon returning from the chase, bringing with them hares and deer, they made a sumptuous feast, and expressed great delight in the presence of King Zoheir and his brother Asyed, making the time pass pleasantly for them, and availing themselves of the delicious hours in joy and delight; and they kept carousing till the cups of wine overpowered them, and darkness came on, and there was not one but fell asleep, in which state they remained till the nocturnal wanderers on the watch surprised them. A troop of

horses came upon them about the break of day, and perceiving the spoil, and no one to protect it, they surrounded them on all sides, and took them prisoners. Now these horsemen belonged to the tribe of Cahtan, and were called among the Arabs the race of Cayan, and their chief was a brave knight, an intrepid warrior, well skilled in the art of war and battle, named the Chief Nazih. As soon as these horsemen had fallen into their power, they returned home, and none escaped of all King Zoheir's sons and brothers but Zambaa and Warca with three slaves, who made their way home, and raised an uproar among the dwellings, and instantly the horsemen mounted, all seeking the valley of Tamarisks. The whole tribe were involved in universal mourning, and loud were the groans and lamentations; it was at that crisis that Shiboob arrived, when he found them oppressed with affliction, and the horsemen already on their way to the valley of Tamarisks.

On Shiboob's inquiring what was the matter, they informed him of all that had passed, and what were their plans. He immediately returned and told his brother Antar, the lion hero, who sent Harith and Labna home, whilst he himself with his companions departed in order to release King Zoheir.

But as to the tribe of Cayan, they continued traversing the deserts till the forenoon, when the meridian heat oppressing them, they halted to

repose by the side of a lake called the Lake of the Waste. Here King Zoheir recovered from his intoxication, and also his sons and brothers, and the other horsemen, but they found themselves in fetters and disgrace. What horseman art thou? said King Zoheir, turning towards the knight of Cayan, and to what Arabs art thou connected, that thou hast braved the princes of the tribe of Abs and Adnan? By the future and the past, we have not fallen into your power but by the will of fate and destiny, so we will ransom our lives with whatever thou pleasest, and we will thank thee; avail thyself of the friendship of such as us.

Nazih, at hearing this, started on his saddle and swaggered about: O God, thanks be unto thee! he exclaimed, I did not know that you were of the tribe of Abs till this moment. With you will I terminate all my sorrows. At last fortune has had pity on me. Youth, cried Asyed, surprised at these expressions, what have we to do with such language? Hast thou any revenge against us thou must satisfy? I have no debt, no retaliation against you, said Nazih, but I will proceed with you to one who is your enemy and foe. He is my lord Obad, son of Temeem, with whom I was brought up an orphan till I attained this high station. I am enamoured of his daughter Dhimya, and am wrecked in the sea of love for her. On her account I endure battles and perils, and have exhibited my

prowess against the inhabitants of Sana and Aden. Besides you, I have found no opposition; but he is most anxious to have hold of one of ye. Yet I have always heard every one say, Beware, approach not the tribe of Abs; but now ye have fallen into my hands, and I will through ye succeed in my designs. Conduct us out of the road, cried he to his comrades, that neither friend nor foe may meet us. So they did as he directed, and Nazih was overjoyed, marching in front of the horsemen, till darkness overspread the land, when they halted by the waters of the tribe Akhrem; and as they were near home, they imagined their important concerns would succeed, for King Zoheir despaired of safety, and so did his brothers and his associates. At daybreak Nazih set out, passing over the barren waste till the forenoon, when lo! a dust appeared in front of them that involved the whole region for an hour. Soon after the dust opened, and there appeared underneath it a man on foot like a bird when it flies, like a leopard when it maddens. Behind him were horsemen clad in iron, like the calamities of extermination. Ahead of them was a black knight on a black steed; he was girt with a well-proportioned spear, and his roar was like the roar of a lion. He was the knight of the swarthy Abs, and their brightest ornament—the serpent of the bowels of the desert—the chief Antar, son of Shedad. How is it, exclaimed Nazih, that this party has

been directed to this spot? They seem but a small number of horsemen, their fate has driven them to death and perdition.

The guide who had conducted them through these ways was called Aboolgharat, son of Aboolfita, the most intelligent man of the time for traversing the wastes and barren wilds. O Nazih, cried he, our hopes are frustrated—our pains are baffled—our object has failed—we have forfeited the aid of heaven, and we have encountered here the slave of the tribe of Abs, and not one of us will effect his escape; but as to your expressions, of how this party was directed to this place, I know that Antar has a brother called Shiboob, by his mother Zebeeba, and he is the calamity of calamities; the misfortune of misfortunes; for when he departed with his brother from the land of Irak at the beginning of the night, he did not halt with him in the morning but in the land of Syria. As to me, I know the roads and the ways no one of all the tribes but myself ever knew; and I am well aware, from my own feelings, when I am in company with any one that can puzzle me, or distract or confuse me in the wilds. But after all, my advice is, that you release the tribe of Abs from bondage, and relieve us from battle and contest, first securing protection from them: do not engage this great warrior, for he is not like those horsemen you have hitherto encountered. Nazih bellowed and foamed: What mean these words? said he, am I with a hundred horse-

men of the tribe of Cayan, and they Himyarites and brave heroes, and shall I fear the contest with this black devil? This day shalt thou see how I will bring destruction upon him.' I will make an example of him amongst mankind. And he rushed towards Antar, galloping and charging to and fro; he thus burst out:

"Away! ye that reprove me, I will not listen to "ye, my railers, I will not answer either by word "or deed. Let me die young; the swords of India "that tear out life are preferable to a life of dis-"honour and infamy. It is not the approach of "the day of battle that alarms me; it is not flight "that shall rescue me from death. Who is he that "avoids it, though death should encounter him? "Death is sweeter to my heart than honey. I "have indeed taken captives the chiefs of a power-"ful tribe. I am a knight, and the world can "testify it."

Nazih having finished his verses, Antar commenced his attack upon him, and as he charged him, he thus expressed himself:

"O antagonist, that wouldst desire a contest "with me in the battle, and wouldst aim at me in "the confusion of spears! How many armies, how "many camps have I routed! and have assaulted "when the water-mills of war were revolving! "The lightning of my sword flashes through the "dust, and its brilliancy sickens the eyes of all be-"holders. The barb of my spear falls on the chests

" of the east and west, till they are all mangled, and
" I will defend the tribe of Abs for ever till I die,
" and their name through me shall be renowned."

Antar again turned upon Nazih, and attacking him, exclaimed, Eh! what a coxcomb art thou amongst thy fellows! thou must be frantic! What Arab art thou? But this day I will silence thy presumption; I will make thee an inhabitant of the tomb, and I will make thee feel the ill-luck of thy resistance against the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and of thy daring violence against the prince of the age.

By the faith of an Arab, said Nazih, I have obtained unbounded good from the tribe of Abs, and I have captured every one of their chiefs and princes, and soon will I bring down annihilation on thee. At hearing this, Antar's passion increased, and he rushed upon him, eager for his death. Nazih met him and fought him; they engaged till their limbs were powerless, and the perspiration streamed down their bodies, and the blood flowed from their wounds. Indignation seized the heart of Nazih; he rushed at Antar and thrust at him, quick as the twinkling of the eye, aiming at Antar's chest; but in this thrust the spear came short, and as it was falling between the eyes of Abjer, Antar warded it off with his shield, but it wounded him in the thigh; then indeed was his wrath roused; he pounced down upon Nazih, and struggling with him till he quite exhausted him, he stretched forth his arm

towards the belt of his armour, and dragged him off the seat of his saddle, and took him prisoner. Shiboob ran up to him and received Nazih from his hands; he bound fast his shoulders, and tied down his arms and his sides, whilst Antar shouted out to his horsemen, and ordered them to strike and thrust. So they attacked the tribe of Cayan, and plied their swords and their spears among them; and the dust arose over their heads. Perdition fell upon the horsemen of Cayan, and the horsemen of Yemen, and they were overwhelmed with perils. The Absians slew thirty of them, and took seventy prisoners. In the mean time Shiboob, seeing them all occupied, hurried towards King Zoheir and his associates, and released them, slackening away from them the tightness of the bow-string. Antar also soon came up with his comrades and saluted King Zoheir, who told him what had passed. O King of the time, said Antar, it is incumbent on every one to give way to the changes of fortune, for it is ever treacherous. But pour forth your thanks to the great God for your deliverance, and your release from this perilous situation. Antar also related all that had happened to him in the land of Irak, and how his horses had been stolen from him on the road, and how he met Shiboob, and Harith, and Labna, and the tribe of Zohran; how he released them all, and slew Kheitaoor. O Aboolfawaris, said King Zoheir, my son Harith lives then? Yes, said Antar, and is now with his family and relations. Glorious indeed are

thy works, O Aboolfawaris, said King Zoheir, for I had despaired of my son. But now conduct us home. King of the age, said Antar, it will first be advisable to cut the throats of these dogs. So Shiboob went up to Nazih first of all, who was in the greatest agony.; he stripped him of his clothes, and his body appeared whiter than hail, and above his wrist was a bracelet of cornelian, and on it were shaped two images of burnished gold in the form of Lat and Uzza. As soon as Asyed saw this bracelet he recognised it, and perfectly recollected it; and as Shiboob was proceeding to despatch Nazih, Hold, my cousin, he exclaimed, a little for me, and he advanced towards Nazih; his agony of mind increased; he took the bracelet in his hand, he kissed it, and wept over it; he sighed and sorrowed. Whence had you this bracelet, young man? he quickly asked. Nazih shed a torrent of tears; Know, my lord, said he, I was brought up an orphan among the tribe of Cayan. Who was your father? demanded Asyed. O my dread lord, said Nazih, I never knew who was my father; neither do I know of what Arab tribe he was. I was brought up as a poor fatherless orphan by the charity of my master Obad, son of Temeem. He has a daughter called Dhimya, and I have loved her from the days of childhood. On her account I have engaged my equals, and have subdued horsemen, and although I am mad to demand her in marriage, modesty has prevented me; and oft I say to

myself, I shall be this evening in his tent, then it shall be done; and again, to-day I will demand his daughter, but I have never ventured yet, and were I to drink of the draught of death and perdition, I shall never approach him, however great my influence is over him, and however serviceable I have been to him. But in my heart I conceal my love for his daughter, and it is only to my mother I complain when my sorrows oppress me; and my mother, she sometimes says to me, O my son, you can never find any relief for this passion till you make an attack upon the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and are roused to seize some of their chiefs and bring them here, then may your plans succeed. For, O my son, your master Obad has an old vengeance against them; and if you do not march against that country, you will never gain your point. Mother, I said to her, I hear every one extol the tribe of Abs for their irresistible steadiness in the day of battle, and they are the knights of extermination and of instant death. But my mother still would say, good luck is oft in penury, and victory comes from God; and moreover, if you have fears, you must ever live a trifler. But take with you this bracelet, on which is the name of the Lord of heaven and earth; your father gave it me, alas! alas! on the night he was wedded to me—and he said to me, Preserve it! So if you succeed in your wishes, praise be to the God of Zemzem and the shrine; and should you be taken prisoner,

this will liberate you from bondage and infamy. I took it from my mother and bound it on my arm, and I set out on an expedition against the vagrant tribes with these hundred men, and I did not discontinue my journey over the deserts till I came to the spot, the valley of Tamarisks, where we overcame you and succeeded in our attempts. There indeed shone clear the proof of my mother's sayings, and with you I was traversing the wilds and the wastes till I encountered this black, this dreadful warrior, and infamy fell upon me, and now you are come to cut off my head.

As Asyed listened to this tale, a shuddering came over him; he gazed at Nazih very minutely, and tracing the well-known features, he clasped him to his bosom, and kissed him between the eyes, exclaiming by the truth of the sacred Shrine, Thou art my son!—thou art a part of my heart! I gave this bracelet to thy mother Selma, and my name is inscribed thereon, and thy mother only sent thee to this land to gain authentic intelligence of us. O my brother, added he to Zoheir, the times have changed and turned round, and what was lost is come back to me: it was of this young man's mother that I spoke to you. All that were present, when they heard this story, were in amazement. But Antar dismounted and received Nazih with great kindness, and kissed him between the eyes, for he was a true lion warrior, and a noble knight. Nazih was much pleased: O tribe of Abs, said he, indeed you are

the mine of liberality and generosity, and he who is connected by birth to you can never care for death. I indeed rejoice in your parentage, and in my union with your lineage, and I will be as a slave among you. Yet must I interrogate my mother about my father, that the truth may be fully proved, and I realise all my expectations.

Make no such delays, O Nazih, said Aboolgharat, you have no occasion to inquire of your mother on this subject, for I am better acquainted with it than any one. I was the person who conducted your master Obad to this country; he invaded it, and took your mother captive. We returned home immediately under alarm that the tribe of Abs and Adnan might overtake us, and on our arrival we divided the spoil, and your mother fell to the lot of your master Obad; and as soon as her pregnancy became evident, he questioned her about her situation, and who was her husband. My husband was slain in the valley, said she. Thus she concealed her story, and never revealed the secret to any one, fearful of death and perdition. This man is your father, and you are his son; but this is no time for talking at length; for we are about to have our heads cut off. At hearing this the noble Nazih smiled, and his heart pitied his people when they communicated to him his real situation; but Asyed hastened and untied his handcuffs, and did the same to the others, and mounted them on horses, and they all set out for the land of the tribe of Abs,

Nazih travelling by the side of his father Asyed, who talked pleasantly with him, and gave him accounts of his mother. Now that it is certain that you are my father, said Nazih, I have no more anxiety on your account; but I must bring my mother here. I am, however, distressed when thinking how I shall remain with you among the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and my mother in the tribe of Cayan will suffer death and infamy; particularly when Obad hears I am an Absian he will not let my mother survive a day, and I shall die of sorrows for her, and regret for his daughter Dhimya. O my son, said Asyed, it appears as if I must either abandon your mother in the hands of foes, or you drive Dhimya from your heart: but let us say no more till we reach home and join our tribe. Thus they travelled on, highly gratified, till evening, when they halted at the waters, and waited whilst the horses were refreshed. They took their dinner, and again mounted their steeds, and passed on during the darkness of the night till morning shone, when they reached the valley of Tamarisks; but as soon as the sun rose they perceived the camp of the tribe of Abs, who were hasting over the desert in pursuit of King Zoheir, for every family was in movement. And as King Zoheir and his party approached, the first that espied them was Rebia; he had also set out on that expedition, hoping that King Zoheir would receive his deliverance at his hands, and thus would his past actions be erased from his

heart: but he was disappointed. The tribe advanced and saluted King Zoheir, and inquired the cause of his captivity, and how it had happened. He related the whole to them, and also the story of Nazih, at which they were in astonishment. Rebia came up to Antar, jealous that King Zoheir had been released by him, and said, O Aboolfawaris, there is no day but we see you in it, for you are indeed the daily food of friends. May no evil, no harm ever reach you! for you are our polished sword and our long spear. Antar thanked him. About evening they set off: they crossed over the desert, and reposed that night in the valley of Erak. In the morning they resolved on pursuing their way: O king, said Asyed, I will go with you to the tents, and thence I will proceed to liberate my wife Selma, and will gratify my son's designs upon Dhimya, for unless I effect this he will never feel happy in staying with us. If such is the case, said King Zoheir, we will all proceed to the cities of Yemen with our warriors and armies, and we will not return till we have accomplished our purpose. No, said Antar, by the faith of an Arab no one but myself shall proceed on this expedition, for I do not see the necessity of your taking all that trouble and anxiety. On hearing this, Rebia thanked him for the loyalty of his spirit. Admirable! my cousin, said he; and I and my brother also, we will go with you, and will expose our lives on this occasion.

Now this speech was only meant to excite Antar to the expedition, for he was vexed at him, as all his plans had failed through him; so he wished him to expose himself among the cities of Yemen, in the full expectation that the calamities of fortune and perils would put an end to him. Antar thanked him for his speech, though well aware of his malice and insidious motives.

We cannot agree with you in this respect, said King Zoheir, we will not let you go into Yemen to endanger yourself on our private necessities with only one hundred horsemen: take with you a thousand of the most tried warriors, that our hearts may be at ease about you. O great king, said Antar, were I even going to the conquest of the cities of Syria, or to fight with the Chosroe of Persia, I would not take so many as a thousand horsemen. I do wish it may be publicly announced that your slave Antar invaded the cities of Yemen, and those countries, with only one hundred horsemen, every one indeed a hardy warrior; and that he executed his objects, and returned with affluence and plunder. But my heart does not feel happy that I should undertake this expedition before my Lord Harith has wedded his bride Labna.

Now Harith was recovered of the wounds he had received; he was quite well and in good health. They continued till they reached their native land, and universal joy and delight was the result of their arrival. They made entertainments and feasts, and per-

fect happiness and felicity dwelt among them. They slaughtered cattle for the banquets; the liquor and the wine went round; the damsels beat the dulcimers; and the high and low were in full glee. Labna was married to Harith; he entered unto her, and he was happy. After feasting seven days, Antar prepared for his expedition and passage over the desert, in order to finish the affair so interesting to Asyed and his son Nazih. He took with him his father Shedad, and three hundred horsemen of the race of Carad; Asyed also went with him, determined on success. King Zoheir accompanied them to take leave, and when they reached the valley of Erak they left King Zoheir behind, and quitted him there. He returned home, and Antar departed for the cities of Yemen.

But as to King Zoheir, he had not rested two days after Antar's departure when Numan's messenger arrived, and with him innumerable camels, and robes, that amazed the eye, and also a thousand Asafeer camels. When King Zoheir learnt the arrival of the messenger, he went out to meet him, and welcoming him to his dwelling, made him dismount, and treating him hospitably, inquired about King Numan's health. And when he had described to him all the goods and presents destined for him (and indeed the quantity was immense), King Numan, he added, salutes you, and desires you to send him your daughter, merely herself; but not a single article of your own property, for he

does not require of you either goods or presents. King Zoheir upon this made a long panegyric on King Numan.

Aswad's messenger also arrived about the same time at the tribe of Fazarah, who did the same towards him as King Zoheir had done with regard to King Numan's. The cymbals were struck up in the hands of the damsels, and they remained in this state seven days. On the eighth day the howdahs were raised on the backs of the camels, decorated with splendid velvet. The ladies were lifted in, accommodated on silken cushions and couches. The standards and ensigns were unfurled, and the men rode round them like lions. Hadifah accompanied his sister with one hundred horsemen, and King Zoheir sent his son Shas with his daughter; and they continued traversing the deserts, the Arabs treating them as they passed, till they reached Hirah. And when Numan heard of their approach he went out to meet them, his brother riding by his side, and surrounded by troops; the drums were beaten on all sides, and this was a day of joy and pleasure, the like of which was never known in the whole world; for Numan gave away alms, made presents, distributed gold and silver, prepared magnificent entertainments, and had tables covered with meat. This continued in the same manner for ten days, and Mootegeredeh was married to King Numan, and the hour and the time were most propitious; and Maria was also married to his brother Aswad, and

theirs was a state of happiness never experienced before by man; each realised his hopes, and all their friends and well-wishers rejoiced. In three days the Arabs separated, and every one took his own road, and every chief sought his own clan. Aswad invested Hadifah with an honorary robe, and also the chiefs of the tribe of Fazarah. So also did King Numan towards Shas; he bestowed on him rich presents, and gave him splendid robes, and treated him in the most distinguished manner.

When Shas saw this, and all the rich presents that were produced before him, O king, said he, do not bestow on me any article of your property, not even to the value of a halter. We only coveted your connexion on account of your glory, and the honour of your name. Numan thanked him; and having loaded the she camel that had conveyed his bride with aloes, and amber, and musk, and perfumes, he also wished to send with him an escort of troops to attend on him and protect him. But, said he, are you not my relation? King Zoheir my father? the tribe of Abs my countrymen? and the protector of our lands and our property, the Chief Antar, son of Shedad? and shall I go with an escort? No! by the faith of an Arab! So he bade them farewell, and departed in company with Hadifah and the tribe of Fazarah.

Now Shas had no one with him but the slave that drove his camel; and when they were at some distance from Kufah they began to converse about

the weddings and the feasts, and each of them talked about his connexion, and what had occurred during the entertainments. Hadifah was quite extravagant in his eulogium of Prince Aswad, extolling him greatly, and preferring him to Numan. Shas was now aware that they wished to irritate him by their discourse; but as he was anxious to put a stop to any enmity or ill will between them, he separated from them, feigning a desire to indulge in the hunt and chase. As soon as Hadifah saw this, he said to his cousins, Let us away over the wastes and the wilds, and let us escape from danger and destruction; perhaps some one may fall upon him who will cut off his head, and will take his horse and his armour, for he is also one of Antar's friends. Thus they passed over the deserts, and Shas followed behind, who being thus separated from Hadifah, travelled alone, amusing himself on the skirts of the waste, and rejoicing at having avoided their misconduct, till he reached the waters of the tribe of Aamir, where he arrived in the obscurity of the night, and as he was exceedingly thirsty, he was much troubled. By the side of the lake there was a huntsman chasing the wild animals as they passed to and fro; he was called Thalaba, the son of Aaridj. He was extending out his nets, and fixing them by the water-side, and as Shas came up, the wild animals being frightened away, the huntsman was much annoyed, and he cried out to Shas, Who art thou? thou hast spoiled my sport, and hast driven

away the beasts from me. Fear not, young man, said Shas, for I will reward you for what you lose. But have you a drink of water, that I may quench my thirst? Ay! you shall have water from me, said the huntsman, but not water that shall moisten your thirst or relieve your entrails. Shas, on hearing this, was very angry, for he was a prince and the son of a prince. You dog of the tribe of Aamir, said he, were you not a poor miserable fellow I would punish you in the manner that kings punish. But the huntsman immediately drew an arrow from his quiver, and fixing it on the centre of his bow, aimed it at Shas by the sound of his voice, and it struck him through the heart, and it hurled him dead off his horse. The slave, when he saw his master fall headlong, left him there, and departed home to the tribe of Abs, making all speed in his flight. Then came up the huntsman, and examined him, and looked at his horse, and lo! its trappings were of gold; and perceiving the garments of a mighty prince upon him, he was in the greatest agitation. He dug a hole for him in the sand, and buried him; but he took away the horse and the camel, and hastened home, and when he came to his wife he acquainted her with the circumstance, and directed her not to discover it to any one. He slaughtered the camel, and distributed the meat, concealing the property and perfumes, and the fine horse. And thus it was all over with Shas.

In the meantime Hadifah reached the tribe of

Fazarah, and the whole universe could not contain him, so excessive was his joy. King Zoheir heard of his arrival, and his heart was in a flame about his son Shas, till the slave also came back and informed King Zoheir of the murder of his son. Great indeed was this affliction. His tears, his lamentations were incessant; he tore off all his clothes. The news soon reached his mother, and his brothers, and his comrades, and their distress equalled his. The whole clan was absorbed in tears, and sobs, and groans. The next day arrived Rebia; and in three days more King Zoheir assembled in haste all his lion warriors, and prepared two thousand horsemen that would have infused fears even into the genii and the fiends. And they departed, traversing the burning sands, seeking the land of the tribe of Aamir; and at their head rode King Zoheir, his heart ulcered with grief, and by his side was Rebia; and they continued their successive marches till they drew nigh to the land of the tribe of Aamir; and when their dust appeared, Ghashm *, son of Malik, mounted, and went out with a party of his people to meet King Zoheir, and saluting him, 'O great king, said he, art thou come to our land to take your pleasure with us, and to hunt in the vicinity? O Ghashm, said King Zoheir, we are not come on a visit or as guests. We are come with no other purpose but to extirpate you with the sword. What,

* Surnamed the Brandisher of Spears.

said the Brandisher of Spears, has produced this enmity between us, that we should deserve such violent measures at your hands after such friendship? Ay, said King Zoheir, for my son Shas, on his return from his relation, King Numan, was slain at your waters. O king, said Ghashm, who told you this? The slave that accompanied him, said King Zoheir, informed me of his murder and his destruction. And would you, O great king, added Ghashm, take away a man in health for one in sickness? and have you believed a base slave to our prejudice? and had even the slave told the truth, how many thieves and robbers are there in our neighbourhood! But if, notwithstanding this, you are resolved on shedding blood, God forbid that hostility should arise between us! But if you will not assent to my proposal, and you are certainly a man of honour, at least have pity on the widows and the infirm. King Zoheir, on hearing this address, returned, alarmed at the consequences of violence and oppression. He hastened his march till he reached home. But his son Cais was extremely afflicted, and wept bitterly, saying, I will not permit the blood of my brother to pass away in vain. I myself will undertake this business. It happened that this was a year of drought and scarcity, and the people were in total want of every thing. So Cais selected two she camels, and loading them with dried dates, and wheat, and butter, sent for an old, grey-headed woman, from whom there was no sort

of deceit concealed. Take these two camels, said he to her, and go to the land of the tribe of Aamir, but take special care not to discover yourself; buy nothing in exchange but rarities and valuable articles, and when any perfumes fall in your way, inquire whence they were imported.

As soon as the old woman heard Cais's instruction, she understood the whole affair, and she departed with a heart proof against all perils. He, however, sent with her some one to conduct her to the tribe of Aamir, and when she reached the dwellings, she roamed about and offered for sale her stock of wheat, inquiring for excellent perfumes in exchange. They produced all the perfumes they had, till she came, in her rounds, to the families of Ghani and Kellab; and, moreover, she importuned the whole tribe of Aamir till she reached the house of Thalaba, son of Aaridj, the huntsman. He himself was, at that period, away from his wife, who, in his absence, being in want of provisions, and seeing this stock brought by the old woman, cried out to her to come into her tent; she conducted her in, and offered her for sale some aloe wood, and musk, and amber, and as she inhaled the fragrance of them, the barren waste was scented with their odour. The old woman was quite amazed at the extraordinary qualities of these perfumes, and their fragrance quite intoxicated her. O my mistress, said she, this is indeed a rarity not to be purchased with wheat. The God of old knows my intention, and may I

never lose my daughter! For God's sake, do now take all my stock, and relieve me from any further trouble and delay. But tell me whence was this perfume brought you, for in no place whatever have I ever seen any thing like it; such as this is not to be found at any merchant's or perfumer's. I will not inform you on this point, said Thalaba's wife, and I will not reveal the business to you unless you promise me, by him who fashioned the human frame, that this affair shall not proceed from you to any human being, and that you will not acknowledge it to any one, man or woman. The old woman acceded to her proposition. O aunt, said she, my husband is called Thalaba, the son of Aaridj, the huntsman, and he gained, in this pitiful business, what no one of the servants of God ever gained before, for one day he was by the side of the lake hunting. It was night, when a youth called Shas, son of King Zoheir, passing by, frightened away the wild beasts, at which my husband was very angry and abused him; the youth spoke in terms that irritated him, so my husband struck him with an arrow and slew him, and when the business was over my husband went towards him and perceived the whole catastrophe. A slave had accompanied Shas, and there was also a black-eyed camel, laden entirely with these perfumes. The slave, on seeing what had happened, fled away, and my husband, having first buried Shas in the sand, immediately came home, and with him the horse and camel; he is now

gone to sell the horse and the trappings in some of the Arab hordes, and will bring me back some gold and silver. Now, were you not a foreign woman I should not have informed you of this extraordinary story. But still I will not let you go after this meeting, till you have given me your promise not to tell any one. I am a foreign woman, said the other, and am very old, and I live in the land of Yemen, and I have never heard any one mention the tribe of Abs or their king's son, Shas. So she made the required promise, and took away all her perfumes, and put them on the two camels; and, bidding her adieu, she departed much pleased at what she had done. She instantly set out for the land of Abs, and she thought she should never reach home, so eager was she to execute Cais's commission, and inform King Zoheir of his son's death, till she actually arrived and related the surprising circumstances that had occurred to her. Now, do what you please, said she, and make whatever arrangements you choose. And what man slew him? said he. Thalaba, the huntsman, said she; and she informed him what Cais had done in his ingenuity, and showed him the perfumes. King Zoheir wept and sobbed, the tears streamed and flowed, whilst he thus gave vent to his grief in verse:

"The vicissitudes of fortune have thrown me
"into misery and wretchedness, and fortune has
"ever evinced its treacherous disposition. I am in-
"volved in affliction by it, as if I were the friend of

" intoxication, produced by excess of wine. It has " left me in solitude; I have no one to assist me. " O that I were with him; united to him in the " tomb. When the messenger of Shas's death ar- " rived, grief took possession of me, and I am " bewildered. O Shas, thou hast cast a grief into " my heart that will not pass away, were even my " life to pass away. Think not, O vengeance, that " thou shalt sleep, now that he is gone. Let not the " goose imagine it shall escape the vulture. Soon " shalt thou see the Absian warriors plunge into " deaths, and seas, and horrors. The kings of the " earth shall see that we are able to take vengeance " on their boldest heroes."

To arms! to arms! cried King Zoheir to those that were about him, and he mounted that very day, accompanied by all the chiefs and Rebia, who thus exclaimed, in verses:

" I was heedless of the nocturnal depredators, and " my heart is insensible to joy. A calamity has " befallen me that has taught me afflictions, and the " heaviest sorrows. O my tears, flow fast from your " stores for the loss of our hero. O my tribe, I have " lost one who was my sword, and my right hand, " and left hand, in the battle. He was a crown on " the heads of the tribe of Abs, brilliant as the full " moon; but that moon is on the wane and is lost, " now that the hostile hand has aimed at him the " fatal arrow. O tribe of Aamir, do ye not dread " the assault, that would even endanger the summits

" of the caverned mountains. O land, now Shas is " gone, what can protect thee? Will the heavens " shadow thee from destruction? Our steeds are " fearless in the contest, and our swords are death's " harbingers in the battle. The barbs of our spears " bear witness that the heights of glory are our " mansions of honour. The kings of the universe " are our slaves. They serve us, and we are the " lords. Shall they venture to oppose us? and we " are on our thin-flanked coursers, like dragons."

When King Zoheir looked round at his sons and saw not Shas, he wept bitterly. They hastened their march, and a burning flame was concealed in their breasts, till they reached the tribe of Aamir. Their chief and ruler was called Khalid, son of Giafir, and their knight that protected them in the days of trouble was the Brandisher of Spears, Ghashm, son of Malik. The family of Ghani had also a skilful warrior whose name was Rebia, son of Ocail, and the family of Kellab had also a horseman called Jandah, son of Beka. These three tribes resided in one land, and their waters approximated, and they were nearly related. But at that time the chief, Khalid, was absent with Prince Aswad, in the land of Irak, who had also married the daughter of his brother, Akhwas, and her name was Saad; and when Khalid heard of Aswad's marriage with Hadifah's sister, he took with him some of the chiefs of the tribe of Aamir to visit him, and when he was about to return, his niece would not let him go. O

my uncle, said she, stay with me till I see how I like my situation; for, indeed, if I am annoyed, I will return to my own country and my family. So he staid some time with her, and it was during his absence these events occurred, and King Zoheir invaded the tribe of Aamir, where he found the dwellings without their warriors, and there was no one but the Brandisher of Swords with a few men. Now, when they saw King Zoheir return, they rode out to meet him, and made a very humble address to him, inquiring the cause of his return. He informed them of the stratagem Cais had adopted, in order to succeed in his object; he also told them that Thalaba, the huntsman, had slain his son Shas. On hearing this, and ascertaining it to be true, they searched for Thalaba, but could not find him. Upon this they sent for his wife, and ordered her to confess; she acknowledged what her husband had done, and produced all the perfumes she still had. King Zoheir was highly incensed, and his eyeballs started into the crown of his head. O tribe of Aamir, cried he, I demand of you one of three conditions. First, that you return me my son as he was; but if you cannot effect that, fill then my outer cloak with the constellations of heaven; and if you cannot effect that, I demand of you the whole tribe of Ghani, that I may sacrifice all their children and their parents. O my lord, said they, verily you insult and outrage us, and demand of us impossibilities; for he who requests what no human being can perform, oppresses

and tyrannizes. It is impossible for any one to revive the dead or kill the living, but Him who outspread the earth and vaulted the skies; but as to your proposal of delivering over to you all the tribe of Ghani, it is a thing you in your senses could never suppose we should do, for you are a generous king, therefore do not exact the living for the dead. But as to exciting war and dissensions among us, heaven forbid that we should ever have recourse to such a proceeding, and that we should exchange our security for alarms and fears. But we will pay you ten times* the price of blood, and we beg of you to set at liberty our women and our daughters. Thus the tribe continued till King Zoheir was duped and relented. Consulting with Rebia about the abandonment of retaliation and their return home, O king, said Rebia, what is this you say? How can we raise our heads among the Arabs, if we permit the blood of Shas to pass unrevenged? And, unsheathing his sword, To arms! to arms! he exclaimed, and rushed with his drawn sabre among the tribe of Aamir, whilst the sons of King Zoheir, also joining in a similar shout, extended their spears and plied their scimitars among them. The shouts arose on all sides; the tribe of Aamir put on their arms and defended themselves; the battle became furious, and many were slain and wounded. Blood flowed and streamed, and the dust uprose and sickened the eye-

* Ten camels was the price of blood in those days.

balls of the shouters. Heads were severed from bodies; the tribe of Aamir just kept off the contest from their children, but were reduced to great distress as the confusion and uproar increased. The tribe of Abs cut through them by the force of their steeds, and slaughtered numbers of their horsemen and troops. On that day the only one that could fight on the offensive, and repel the attack, was the Brandisher of Spears, for he was one of the renowned heroes and celebrated warriors; but observing the tribe of Abs, how they overpowered him, and the numbers of his own party, how they were cut up, and alarmed for their total annihilation, and the destruction of his country, he took with him a party of his tribe, all noble horsemen, and repaired to King Zoheir, who was under the standards; he dismounted and paid obeisance, and kissing his hand, O dreaded king, said he, do not the deeds of a coward, for you are a great prince. Draw back your swords from us, that we may extract this tribe for you from the midst of us, and may separate from them and deliver them over to you. Do not destroy us for the crimes of others, leave us quiet in our lands and territory. All I request of you is, to delay for the remainder of this day, and to-morrow morning come on and the tribe shall be yours. He continued to engage his compassion in this proposal, and so humiliated himself, that King Zoheir was induced to agree to his request. I grant you, said King Zoheir, the term of this day, so that no blame

or reproach may attach to us. And he immediately directed his slaves to order back the troops from the contest. The Brandisher of Spears returned to his tribe: Now then, said he, entrench your women and families on the summits of the mountains, for I have circumvented King Zoheir in my discourse. Let us occupy a strong post for some days, till the sacred moon shine upon us, when battle and contention must be stopped, and these unexpected oppressors must depart. Moreover too, our Chief Khalid may arrive from the land of Irak, and he will avert from us this insupportable calamity.

The tribe of Aamir, on hearing this, were convinced of the expediency of the measure. So they all hastened away, and struck their tents and dwellings, every one carrying away his property, and placing his family in security among the mountains. Before daylight, the whole country was abandoned, and they moved like waves towards the hills.

By the dawn of day King Zoheir mounted, and when he saw what they had done, he was aware that the Brandisher of Spears had deceived him. He was furious with passion, and marched in haste against the Aamirites, with his men, and besieged them in the mountains. All that fell into his hands he made to drink of the cup of death and extinction, for the troops were greatly exasperated. They continued in this state for five days, and then arose the sacred moon. It was the month of Redjeb, which the ignorance of the Arabs sanctified. War

ceased during that time, and had it happened that any one had killed his father or his brother, it was never spoken of to him, and he could not be brought to trial. The Arabs went every where unarmed; and for that reason it was called the deaf and dumb month, for the ears were insensible therein, and the Arabs, laying aside their arms, repaired to the holy Shrine, and made a pilgrimage, demanding forgiveness of sins.

When King Zoheir perceived the rising of the moon, and that the month of Redjeb had commenced, his heart was in flames, and burned with rage. He abandoned the contest, not to give an evil example among the Arabs.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE Absians were returning home, when, said King Zoheir to his son Cais, Fetch me hither your mother, that we may visit the holy Shrine, and pass these days there: and thence I will return to these dastards, and will extirpate them with the sword. Cais accordingly departed, and went home. King Zoheir afterwards repaired to Mecca, after having waited for the arrival of his wife, and a party of female attendants; and they halted in a part of the sacred valley, which had been the quarter of the Absians for ages; for the Arabs had ever possessed there each their respective abode.

At this time also the Chief Khalid returned from his visit to his niece, and as he was passing with his followers by the sacred Shrine, he sought the fulfilment of his religious duties, previous to his proceeding home. So he made also a pilgrimage with a party of Aamirites, and amongst them was the Brandisher of Spears. They all met Khalid, and informed him what had passed, and the plans they had adopted; how King Zoheir had invaded them, to seek vengeance for his son Shas, and the numbers he had slain.

At this recital Khalid's eyes became like fire:

Woe, woe unto thee, O Zoheir, son of Jazeemah! he cried. Alas! that I was not present when thou didst perpetrate that villanous deed. Truly thou hast taken advantage of my absence, and hast slain some of my family and my tribe; but if I do not requite thee for thy acts in the dusty fight, I am not of the loins of Giafer. He reposed, and at dawn of day he went round the Shrine and the portico, and met King Zoheir in the circuit. He no sooner beheld him than his very entrails were on fire. Zoheir, he exclaimed, thou hast indeed accomplished thy iniquitous projects against the tribe of Aamir; thou hast availed thyself of the inferior numbers of their troops. Thou hast violated our wives, and our noble matrons. Truly, I have had my revenge, replied Zoheir, and I have quenched my fury: had it not been for this sacred month, I would not have left among you either an old or a young one, and I must root out every vestige as soon as these days are expired: Dost thou not fear, said Khalid, that the vicissitudes of fortune may turn against thee, and against thy family, and that thy vestiges may be rooted out as those of thy predecessors?

Then went Khalid towards the Caaba, and prayed, O Thou, who hast raised these columns, and hast consecrated the glory of this place, and hast made it a sanctuary for the Arabs, let not this year pass away before my hand rest on the neck of Zoheir; grant me but to reach him, and through thee I will vanquish him. But Zoheir, in the excess of his

presumption, thus said, O Lord, let not this year pass before thou grantest me the accomplishment of my designs. Let my hand rest on the neck of Khalid, and no assistance do I require against him.

Now, as he spoke, there was a crowd of Arabs around him, and as soon as they heard these words, they kissed the columns of the sacred shrine, and turning towards King Zoheir, In this very year thou wilt expiate with thy life the words thou hast spoken, cried they all. Did I not respect these days, said Zoheir to them, I would drink of the blood of Khalid, as guests drink of wine. And Khalid turned away from him, and all the Arabs separated. Khalid, after remaining at Mecca three more days, set out to his own country with his tribe, and thus exclaimed in verse—

"Prepare, O Zoheir—come to the field—let our "blood flow—let the forbidden now become legal. "O tribe of Aamir, brandish with me the barbed "spear, and unsheath the sword. Incur not dis- "grace in the day of attack; sell your lives, and die "honourably. If infamy establish itself in our "dwellings, haste away and quit the tents. O tribe "of Aamir, the time is eventful; raise the sword "against your foes. Lay low Zoheir and his sons, "when they quit Zemzem and the shrine. Draw "upon them the sharp scimitar, tear off their flesh "and their bones, that we may destroy the sup- "ports of Abs, as our brother laid low Shas. Let "us make their wives widows, and by the death

" of their heroes let us make their children or-
" phans."

When Khalid had finished his verses, he pressed forward his march, his heart boiling with a blazing flame against Zoheir, and with him was the Brandisher of Spears and ten horsemen. On reaching home, they perceived that their families had come down from the mountains, and had pitched their tents on account of the sacred month. But in many of the dwellings there were wailings and lamentation for the horsemen that had been slain. Khalid went down among them and consoled them. On that very day he assembled the three tribes, and informed them what had passed with Zoheir in the land of Mecca; and I am resolved, he said, to attack the tribe of Abs, and I will not stop till I have succeeded in my project, and when I have slain Zoheir, I will repair to their lands, and I will exterminate their families and their tribe; for Antar is absent, and they seem fearless of calamities.

The Aamirites assented, and prepared for the march, amounting to five thousand brave horsemen. And when there was only a short space of the sacred month remaining, they terminated all their preparations in seven days and departed, Khalid having first sent different parties by different routes, and appointed a leader to each. Haste then, said he, on this expedition, and let us all meet in the land of Howazin. So they separated, and set off for the spot he had pointed out to them, where they con-

cealed themselves, and remained in anxious expectation of the event. But as to King Zoheir, the pilgrimage being now over, he returned with his followers, and his heart was boiling with rage against Khalid. He continued his march till he reached the market of Ocadh, where he halted among the Arabs, who entertained him for three days; and quitting them in security, he pressed on under the influence of Fate, till he came to the land of Howazin, where he halted at the waters about the evening. He took his repast, and did not repose till night. O my father, said Prince Cais, march with us during the night; perhaps we may avoid the tribe of Aamir, for you indeed have stamped on them the foulest disgrace, and I fear for your sake their Chief Khalid. King Zoheir, on hearing these words, exclaimed, What sayest thou, O Cais? Who are these vile Aamirites, or Khalid, or all the inhabitants of the barren waste? By the faith of an Arab, I will not stir hence for three days. Cais, when he heard this, felt aware that death was at hand. But he roused his companions for the contest, obliged as he was to yield to his father's authority.

At the dawn of day, whilst King Zoheir was sitting among his tribe, behold a horseman advanced in haste from the quarter of the tribe of Aamir, and that horseman was the brother of Temadhur, King Zoheir's wife, and he was come as a spy from the tribe of Aamir. He had long since established himself among them, and married one of their

women; for he detested King Zoheir, because he had banished him from the country; and had not his sister Temadhur been present, Zoheir would have put him instantly to death. So when King Zoheir drove him away, he took refuge among the tribe of Aamir, and settling himself among them, married there, and adopted all their habits, never ceasing to abuse King Zoheir. We have mentioned that Khalid was waiting in ambush for Zoheir; O my cousins, said he to his comrades, who of ye will go to the waters of the land of Howazin, and procure intelligence for us of Zoheir, son of Jazeemah, so that our labours may not be lost, nor our projects fail? O Khalid, they replied, for such an expedition you need no one but Amroo, son of Shireed, for he is a relative of that tribe, and one of them; and he is the only person that can procure intelligence for us: he has a very good excuse when he sees them that can give no umbrage, for he can say to them, I am come to congratulate my sister on her return from Mecca. Thus he may observe where they have halted, and tell us of their march. But I fear, said Khalid, he may betray us, and impart to his tribe all we have done. Upon that score there is no fear, said they; his hatred to King Zoheir is unquestionable. On this, he ordered him to his presence, and telling him what he wanted, Amroo thanked him, and assented, saying, I will bring you the required news, provided you will make this condition with me—it shall be a covenant between

me and you, and for it I must take the firmest engagement and promise. They agreed to his proposal, saying, Explain to us your demands.—When you have slain King Zoheir, said he, and you have succeeded in your wishes, capture not my sister Temadhur, and slay not one of her sons.—Let this be a sacred covenant between you and us, said Khalid; and he promised all he required, requesting his aid in the accomplishment of their hopes.

Amroo quitted them about midnight, and in the morning he reached the waters of Howazin; and as soon as King Zoheir saw him, he recognized him. Father, this is my uncle, said Cais; he is hastening towards us; I am convinced he is a spy from the tribe of Aamir.

And before Cais had finished, Amroo arrived, and congratulated King Zoheir on his pilgrimage: he then repaired to his sister, and saluting her, seated himself. O uncle, said Cais, what has brought you here?—I am come on a visit to you, said Amroo, and to congratulate you on your pilgrimage. I have also some news for you; which is, that Khalid son of Giafer, on his return from Mecca, assembled all the Aamirite chieftains, and related to them what happened with your father at the sacred shrine: he wept torrents of tears before them: revenge and rage rose in tumults in their hearts, and they have combined against your wicked and iniquitous designs. Unanimous in their resolution to waylay you on your return from the

sacred shrine, they marched out some days ago, and are five thousand in number. They heard of your having halted at the market of Ocadh; and out of my alarms for you I am come to congratulate you, and give you this information.

Well, Amroo, said King Zoheir, what have we to fear? We are able to meet our enemies; and if they have sent you as a spy, return and tell them that I will not move hence till I meet them and destroy them, high and low.—Great King, said Amroo, you still hate me; your detestation is not yet extinct. So I have lost my pains, though I was willing to make peace, and even my kindness to you is received as an act of baseness. I have only been induced to this deed by my fears for my sister, that she should be made captive, and infamy be heaped on me, east and west: but now that I have seen her my heart is at ease, and if I again return to you pardon not my offence. He then moved towards his horse, in order to mount and return. Cais would not permit him to execute his purpose; but he sprung at him like a hissing serpent, and threw him under him, and secured his arms. Uncle, he cried, I will not let thee go from us, and I will not let thee escape out of our power, till we have passed over this country, and we approach our own land.—What is this, my son? said his mother. Why hast thou seized the person of thy uncle, and thus repaid him for his visit to us? O mother, said Cais, let me alone in this affair; do

not question me. I will not release him till he gives me the promise of God and his engagement that he will not mention us to any human being, and will not give any information of us either to man or woman.—My brother, said Temadhur, give the required promise to my son Cais. Upon this Amroo, having sworn and bound himself by oaths that for three days he would not mention any one of them, Cais untied the ropes, and granted him his liberty: but he requested of his sister Temadhur some provisions, to feed him till he reached home. She gave him some bread and milk, and he mounted his horse and departed.

As soon as Amroo was gone, and vanished among the sand-hills and the mountains, Zoheir turned towards his son, to rebuke him. What is this thou hast done with thy uncle? cried he; this is all through fear of death or the foe.—Yes, my father, said Cais; for when a wise man has an enemy, he sleeps not by night. His father's expressions convinced Cais that death was at hand; so he went out with the horsemen, and stationed himself on the look-out for the enemy.

But as to Amroo, he urged on his march incessantly till he reached the tribe of Aamir. They mounted, and met him; as also did Khalid, though he believed he should never see him again. And when he came up to him, he asked him how he was: he gave no answer; but turning aside towards some erak trees, he alighted beneath them, and

placed down on the ground before him the bottle that contained the milk. Amroo pointed to the trees with his hand, and thus addressed them: Thou form, that canst return no reply, and understandest not what is said, and canst not distinguish between right and wrong, truly I have been provided with milk from a hated tribe. I wish thou wouldst taste thereof, that no harm may come to me from drinking it. O my cousins, said Khalid, the man has fallen among the tribe: afraid of him, they have bound him by oaths that he will not speak of them, nor give any human being information of them: he has thus engaged himself by oath, and had it not been so, he could not have escaped from them. The wisest plan is for you to taste this milk, and try his food; if it be sweet, it is fresh milk, and Zoheir is near us; if it be sour, and the victuals tainted, then the party is distant in the barren wastes. Accordingly, some of the horsemen approached and drank of the milk, and it was fresh camels' milk. They informed Khalid: You have proved the fact, said he, and I am convinced Amroo only left them in the land of Howazin; and it is my advice that we march against them instantly. Let us seek them, and disperse ourselves over the desert in search of them; and if we fall upon them in this desert, we will bring down death and extinction upon them; and if we do not meet them, we will return to the high road, where we must find them halting somewhere to repose.

Thus Khalid formed his plans for the execution of his purpose, and urged on over the plains and wastes till it was night; when they returned to the high road, and continued their march till they reached the waters of Howazin by morning.

'Cais was stationed as the scout; and as soon as he saw the dust of the tribe as it drew nigh, he returned to his father. Be on your guard, O father, he cried, for there approaches what you cannot overcome.—What is the matter? said Zoheir. The dust of the foe is at hand, said Cais; there is the tribe of Aamir, and Khalid son of Giafer: and his tears burst forth in torrents as he spoke. But his father mounted his horse, having first clothed himself in armour, to meet his foes and his enemies. Welcome, welcome to Khalid, the son of Giafer the Aamirite, he cried, and galloped forward on his horse Caasa, followed by his sons and his troops.

When Khalid saw this formidable array, he called out to the tribe of Aamir, and excited their energies for the stroke of the cleaving swords. Upon this, shouts were raised, swords were drawn, spears were extended; all shouted, and attacked, and exclaimed, and vociferated. Fury boiled in every bosom; patience and perseverance were evinced by all. The scene was dreadful; multitudes crowded promiscuously; discourse was at an end. The cowards fled; round them revolved the cup of perdition. The dust thickened like clouds. Zoheir roared and bellowed: he gave vent to all his feelings,

and poured forth his fury and his pride: he assailed them, and exposed himself to dangers. But before mid-day the Aamirites resolved on flight, for they saw in the Absians what amazed their senses. Not one of the Aamirites could stand firm in that terrific hour but the Chief Khalid, son of Giafer; for he preferred death to flight.

At that moment arrived another division of the tribe of Aamir, every one of them eager for the battle; and as soon as they appeared their hearts were comforted, and they attacked: for among them were Knights whose equals the age could not produce, Rebia, son of Ocail, and Jandah, son of Beka, and their companions were the champions of the tribes. Upon this, they made an assault from every direction; their shouts arose on high; numbers increased against the Absians, whose difficulties augmented; patience and perseverance were exhausted; for they did not consist of more than one hundred men, and their enemies were five thousand warriors, all armed with spears.

But King Zoheir, when he was aware that there was no reprieve from death, and evidently beheld his destruction, resolutely encountered the barbs of the spears that goaded him on all sides; and he made assaults such as after ages never witnessed. Khalid marked his exploits, and threw himself upon him, anxious for a personal contest; at the same time thinking that though he might kill him, he should also be slain himself. They shouted and

roared aloud till they distinguished death and an eternal blindness; the earth and sky vanished from them.

Heaven protect us from the unenlightened persons of that period of Arabian ignorance, particularly from such as these two warriors renowned in battle, namely, King Zoheir, and Khalid, son of Giafer!

They continued now to close, now to start asunder; and a combat and contest arose between them that would have turned infants gray. They persisted in driving at each other till their spears were shivered: they flung them on the ground, and drew their swords: they did not desist from smiting each other with their sabres till their arms were quite exhausted. Throwing these likewise away, they grasped each other on their horses till their wrists were quite numbed, and continued in this position till they both fell at once on the sand; but Khalid fell uppermost, upon King Zoheir, on account of his arrogant speech at Mecca.

Khalid attempted to draw his sword, but he could not quit the hold of his antagonist; upon which King Zoheir cried out to the Absians, Come to me, and assist me against Khalid; and if ye cannot succeed against him, then slay him, and slay me too. At that moment his son Warca stood near him, and the instant he heard his father call out, being beneath Khalid, O my father! he exclaimed, and he threw himself towards him, and dispersing

the Aamirites, struck Khalid a blow on the shoulder. But the sword turned round in his hand, and slipped aside, and he could not relieve his father from the power and oppression of the foe. Then came up Jandah, son of Beka, and heaved up his arm with his sword, and struck King Zoheir on the crown of the head; and his brains dropped out from his head, for the blow fell right against his temples: he heard his sword grate and rattle against Zoheir's skull. Convinced that the blow had made its way into Zoheir, and had slain him, Arise now, my cousin, he cried to Khalid, for it is all over with him; and Khalid sprung up off his chest, and his project was completed. He seated himself again on his horse's back, as he cried out to his cousins and troops, saying, O my cousins, retire from these dastards, for my purpose has succeeded, and God has listened to my prayer.—What has this to do with us? said Rebia, son of Ocail. I swore to Amroo, said Khalid, by him who hath spread out the earth and the canopy of the skies, that I would not take his sister Temadhur captive, and that I would not slay one of her sons; and now that we have accomplished our designs against Zoheir, I wish to fulfil my promise and engagement with Amroo. Thus commanding his horsemen to withdraw their hands from the blow and the thrust, he departed, seeking his family and home, having first taken possession of King Zoheir's sword, Zinoor, and his charger, Caasa; and as they were traversing the plain and the waste, Khalid turned towards Jandah,

and said, Well then, the blow you struck Zoheir was mortal? Eh! for I have sworn by the sacred shrine, that if we met we should not part but in death.—I struck him such a blow, said Jandah, were even assistance to come from Hibel for him, never will he revive to snuff the air of heaven; for my arm is powerful, and my sword sharp; it would cleave even iron. And when I heard the rattle and grating of my sword against Zoheir's skull, something issued like the oil of jessamin. I tasted it with my tongue, and I perceived it salt, so I was convinced it was the juice of his brains, and that his career was closed. Upon that Khalid smiled, and thanked him for his deed.

But as to King Zoheir's sons and his people, when they knew of his death, they feared for their own destruction: they gave their horses their heads, and fled away, till all pursuit being cut off, they halted. And as they expressed their regrets for King Zoheir, said Cais to his uncles and brothers, Return with me to my father, that we may carry him away with us; for if there is a breath of life, we will cure him, and if he is dead, we will dig a grave for him, and bury him; for the enemy has given us up, and something has called away their attention from us.

He accordingly returned with them to his father, whom they found in agonies. He dismounted, and spoke to him: he opened his eyes. What dost thou want of me, my son? said he, in a faltering voice;

depart, for thou art my successor, and only seek to avenge me on Khalid, son of Giafer; there is no occasion for me to recommend to thee thy cousin Antar. With this last injunction he again fainted. All present burst into tears and lamentations; they let loose their turbans about their necks. Their clamorous grief recalled Zoheir to life. Shall we not carry thee home with us? said Cais. No, said he; do not move me, my son. Trouble not thyself, for the blow on my head has inflicted its death on my heart, and I must inevitably die. A corpse is but dust; only just let it be concealed from the wild beasts and the wolves. Here his speech failed, and he expired.

So they dug a grave for him, and having buried his dust therein, they returned home, their tears streaming copiously. But Warca was more grieved and afflicted than any one, and his mind was in the greatest agony on account of his blow at Khalid, when the sword turned round in his hand, for he knew the Arabs would shame him on account of such a blow. He evidently wished for death in the excess of his anguish and the calamity he endured, and he thus mourned his father:

"I beheld my father under the breast of Khalid,
"and all my happy prospect died in him. He cried
"out to us—O by Abs, turn towards me, for my
"eyes are overpowered by Khalid. I rushed upon
"him, and the horse shook their quivering spears,
"and death closed up every passage. But my

"sword turned round in my hand and betrayed
"me, and the God of heaven's canopy palsied my
"hand and my arm: O that before I had struck at
"Khalid I had drunk the cup of the poison of
"venomous beasts! O that before I rushed on,
"the pangs of death had seized me in the contest!
"My mother Temadhur will not be congratulated,
"as she was once congratulated by illustrious heroes
"at my birth. She indeed depended on me, and
"she prayed for my success; but her hopes have
"been disappointed in the hour of tribulation. I
"am become a common tale, after this blow at
"Khalid; I shall be spurned by foes and enemies.
"O that I had been laid low in the dark desert,
"and that the birds were devouring me! O son of
"Giafer, may the God of the canopy make thee
"drink of the cup of extinction, and of death, hot
"and cold! May the Omnipotent God, the uni-
"versal Ruler, destroy thee, and mayest thou feel
"the direst evils of fortune, O Khalid! Soon ye
"shall see horsemen brandishing death on their
"spears and their arms. Alas! O tribe of Abs and
"Adnan, rush to the fight, and come to me with
"your illustrious heroes. O Absian Antar, Cham-
"pion of the tribe, thou sympathisest with them
"in the hour of battle and adversities. Come on,
"O tribe, to revenge; haste—for the foe and our
"rivals have triumphed over us. May the Lord
"steep their land in blood; may it be a den of lions,
"and may the birds never fly over it! The enemy

"reposes on the couch of gratulation in the murder
"of Zoheir, and Khalid's heart is exulting. Alas!
"O my cousins, rush on to the sea of death with
"your spears and your arms. Let us slay every
"one of their chiefs; let us take their women cap-
"tives in fetters and chains; let us destroy the Ke-
"labians, with the tribes of Ghani and Aamir; and
"let us extirpate a thousand knights for one. Alas!
"alas! how the foe laid him low; and the hand of
"the antagonist and the hater has stretched him on
"the ground. My dependance was on him: I even
"thought fortune feared his might, and would de-
"mand pardon of him in adversities. Oh! I shall
"weep for him as long as I live with ulcerated eyes,
"whose lids no rest shall visit. Since it is my doom
"to be cast down in misery, I will mourn in flowing
"tears that shall never be stayed."

Then, as they pursued their journey homewards, Temadhur dashed her fists against her cheeks, ever casting her eyes behind her: she anxiously wished to destroy herself, yet her better reason checked her, for she was one of the most sensible of women: still she was reduced to misery and ignominy. But as to the tribe of Aamir, when they reached their own country, the Brandisher of Spears came forth with his suite to meet Khalid, saluting him, and inquiring about all that had passed. Khalid informed him of the victory and triumph, at which the Brandisher of Spears was happy and delighted, until he heard of the safety of King Zoheir's sons, at which

he was grieved and distressed. O Khalid, said he, what thou hast done is wrong; had I been with thee, by the faith of an Arab, I would not have left a head or tail of them; for when a man undertakes an affair, he should finish it, and should not leave any thing to be done.

Cousin, said Khalid, I was afraid the same misfortune would befal me as King Zoheir. But now, he added, I wish you would execute an act that will make you renowned indeed. Take with you one thousand horsemen, and proceed to the defiles between us and Yemen: conceal yourself there till Antar returns, and do with him as I have already done with Zoheir, for I have heard that Antar is in the land of Yemen, and with him a party of horse that despise the calamities of the times. If you can slay them, we shall succeed in all our attempts, and by killing them, we shall destroy the strong defence of the Absians.

When Gheshm heard Khalid's advice, his pride and vanity were shocked, and he was greatly annoyed, for he was a puissant horseman, and a stout hardy warrior. Hast thou not found for me any greater honour, said he to Khalid, than to detach me against a baseborn slave? Let me protect our property and families. I will assemble for them the troops and the heroes; go thou thyself on this expedition thou hast planned, and relieve me from the life of Antar. He then despatched horsemen in every direction, and ordered every one to as-

semble who had blood or vengeance against the Absians. In three days Khalid had equipped one thousand brave horsemen, amongst whom were Jandah and Rebia, son of Ocail, with whom he set out towards the defiles, saying to his cousins, We are engaged in an affair whose knot cannot be well tied, till we have completed it, and have executed the most difficult part of it. We have indeed cut off the serpent's head, but the tail remains.

The defiles where Khalid was going were on the road by which every traveller must pass, and the Arabs called them the defiles of Mesarih. Khalid had taken to himself King Zoheir's horse Caasa, and made it his own charger, and also his sword Zeenoor. They continued their march till they reached the defiles, where he halted with his party in the meadows and ravines. Now, as to Aboolfawaris Antar, he set out with Asyed and his son Nazih, as we before mentioned, and entered the land of Yemen, in order to rescue Selma, Asyed's wife, and to assist his son Nazih with respect to Dhymia, the daughter of Obad. They continued traversing the wastes till they came nigh unto the land of the tribe of Cayan. But Nazih perceiving on a sudden birds flying about and scimitars flashing, shouts and battles, and armies and camps, Alas! said he to his comrades, we have fallen on what we did not expect. Compose your heart and brighten your eye, said Antar; proceed on forward with your party, and ascertain what is the matter,

that we may take measures accordingly. Nazih slackened his bridle, and galloped up to the tents of the tribe of Cayan, where were the women in the greatest affliction, and the young damsels in tears. He beheld his chief Obad, and he was one mass of wounds. Dhymia was weeping among the women, and still exciting the horsemen to the combat, and rallying the troops to face the contest. At the sight of his mother Selma, he was quite distracted, as she was crying out: O my son Nazih, from what quarter can I call thee? and in what land shall I meet thee? Congratulate yourself, exclaimed Nazih, advancing towards Obad, victory and conquest are at hand; but what's this misfortune? O my son, he replied, are we involved in this calamity, and you among the living still? Where have you been, and what has happened to you and to your comrades? O my lord, said Nazih, mine is too long a tale to relate now; but inform me what has happened to you, and congratulate yourself on the fulfilment of every hope. For with me are horsemen, were they to assault the ocean, they would disperse its waves; were they to strike the mountains, they would rend open their sides. But who are these foes? O my son, said Obad, after your departure from hence, Nacmah, son of Ashter, King of the land of Sawdah and the mountain of Ghemam, sent and demanded my daughter Dhymia in marriage, but I refused her, and rejected his suit, sending back his messenger in despair. He repeated his offer, but I still denied

him, till his rage and indignation became excessive; and he ordered against me his armies, with his son Kelboon, and a contest took place between us.

Nazih listened, and the light became dark in his eyes; he hastened back to Antar, and told him what had happened. But Antar soothed his heart, and dividing his troops into three bodies, ordered them to make a general assault. Oorwah and his men he stationed on the right, and Nazih and a hundred men to the left, and he himself stood with a hundred horsemen in the centre. Asyed also stopped on a rising ground with ten horsemen, resolved also to fight; but Antar would not permit him: This is not right, said he, think not of exposing yourself among this tribe of dogs; stand firm at your post with this standard, that our foes may know we have also a knight-chief. Antar shouted out to the Absians, and leading the attack, thus expressed himself:

"When the dawn shines from the east, and the "birds sing and mourn on the entangled trees, my "sword flutters in my scabbard, and cries out that "it longs for the contest. My spear quivers when it "sees the experienced warriors brandish their lances. "My horse aids me on the day of the spear-thrust; "when it moves, the winds even are dead. Behold "a true-hearted warrior, when the horsemen see him "they fling away their arms. O cup-bearer of death, "prepare the glass for us, for I am resolved on de-"parture. Give us to drink nought but the drops

"of blood, when the people drink of water and "wine! Let the skulls be our apples, and spears "in the battle our fragrant flowers! Sing to my "distracted heart of my love for the beauteous Ibla, "adorned with jewels. Be patient under the dark "shadows of the battle and the harsh din of the "combat, if thou art enamoured of lovely woman. "I am Antar, like the lion of the tomb, I destroy "enemies with the blow of my scimitar!"

As soon as Antar had finished his verses, he received the whole tribe of Arcat as the parched earth receives the first of the rain, with blows that would cleave a rock, and blind the vision, and stupefy the senses. The tribe of Arcat was the most potent of all the tribes of the land of Yemen, so also was their king pre-eminent above all the kings of those regions, the most arrogant and most powerful of all their ignorant and blasphemous race; addicted to debauchery among the maidens and the matrons of Arabia, for whom beldams in his employment searched amongst the tribes, and whenever they happened to find a beautiful maiden or lovely damsel, they came to him and informed him; then would he send to her father to demand her in marriage, and if her father assented, it was all well; but if he refused, Nacmah would mount against him with his armies and his bravoes, and would subdue him with the sword-blow and the spear-thrusts, and seizing her by force, he would keep her as his slave, till he should hear of some other, when he would

make her over to his servants, and take another, with whom he would act as with the first. About this time he heard of the beauty of Dhymia, the daughter of Obad, and he sent to make his proposals, as we mentioned. But Obad sent his messenger disappointed away, saying, I will not marry my daughter to an ignorant tyrant.

As soon as Nacmah heard this reply, he was in a violent rage. He forgot it for a short time, and repeated his message, but still Obad rejected him. Now, said Nacmah, I must reduce him to disgrace, and subdue him by force, and he instantly sent for his son, whose name was Kelboon, a brave man, and a sturdy warrior; him he ordered to mount, and proceed against the tribe of Cayan, and bring with him his beloved Dhymia. His son Kelboon obeyed his orders and mounted, speeding to the tribe of Cayan; when he arrived, he attacked them without any excuse, or previous notice, or explanation: for the tribe of Arcat acknowledged no law or compact; they worshipped the moon, and prostrated themselves before it when new, and when at the full, at its renewal, and its completion; and on the fourteenth night they demanded of it all their wants and exigencies, renouncing him who spread out the earth and raised up the skies. In every month they had a festival, and they rejoiced at the rise of the new moon. Kelboon plied among the tribe of Cayan the blow of the deadly sword without any cause assigned, or previous warning. The

carnage lasted three days; but on the fourth day arrived Antar, and Nazih, and Asyed, and found the tribe of Cayan reduced to great straits and difficulties, all huddled together in their tents, and disasters were falling heavy on them.

Antar divided his troops into three corps: they rushed upon the encampment, and trampled down the foe from every quarter; for Antar's rage and fury were at their height. He shouted at the horsemen of Arcat—he dispersed them—he drowned them in their own blood—he mangled the foe as he cut through them—he gored their breasts with his spear—he crushed their ribs—he dragged forth their lives—he spoiled them of their existence—he dyed their carcasses in blood, and painted them with gore—he dashed down their skulls, and tossed them about—he vociferated at the foe, and the Absians answered to his shout. The enemy were only anxious to escape by flight, for the tribe of Arcat saw death was come upon them, and they fled. Antar's yell was heard again, and the whole country was in convulsions. Then retreated the tribe of Arcat from the tents, as they still saw horsemen gathering upon them, and warriors assailing them: back they turned, but death was ever before their eyes. They dispersed like wild beasts, every one felt the certainty of his fate; to every one this truth was unquestionably manifested.

Their Chief Kelboon was stationed beyond the field of battle and carnage, and with him a body of

warriors. He was expecting the prisoners to be brought to him, for he had seen the party of Absians when they attacked and plunged into the fight, but he despised them on account of their inferior numbers. He knew not they were the horsemen of fate, and of instant death. But when he perceived his comrades scattered right and left, he shuddered, crying out at them, What means this abandonment of the contest? He himself then attacked the Absians, and he found in them warriors who regarded not wealth, who wished not for life, who never thought of flight, who feared not the storm of fire, but whose assault was like the assault of hungry lions, and whose spear-thrusts pierced the breasts and the ribs. Then was the calamity frightful, and awful the catastrophe. The arrows of destruction were sped, and the warriors shrunk away terrified at death, and at the circling cups of perdition, and the furious steeds of annihilation. Some rushed upon their fate, some sought safety in flight. They demanded succour of Kelboon. We advise you, cried they, to fly, before this knight comes down upon you, and tears off your head from your shoulders. He was highly indignant at such a suggestion, and sparks of fire shot from his eyes. He drew his sword, and smote his companions; five of them he slew. Eh! he cried, what is there more intolerable than this? How? what? can a thousand horsemen of Arcat fly from one hundred only, many of whom are slain too? By the truth of the rays of

the new moon and the full, and by the night when it is dark and obscure, I will show you what I will do with this horseman; and he darted from beneath the standards, and with him five hundred men, brave warriors, in whom he could confide, and every one almost his equal in skill at arms.

When Antar had eased his fury, and routed all that came before him, he turned towards his heroic Absians, and saw them fiercely engaged with two thousand horsemen: he was alarmed for his comrades, on account of those fellows who rolled on like the salt sea. He was also much afraid for Nazih, and these circumstances creating great disquietude in his mind, he sent them out of his hundred men thirty horsemen, and then galloped forward with the remaining seventy, to seek the King's son's standard, whom he observed hastening towards him, attended by his five hundred; and as he approached Antar, Advance, he cried to his people, towards this demon, and ask him of what Arab tribe he is. So they charged upon him; but one anticipated the rest, and he was a spear-armed warrior. What Arab art thou? cried he; whence comest thou, frantic as thou seemest? But Antar, though he heard this speech, condescended not to reply. He attacked him, and made at him; he pierced him through the chest, and hurled him over. He also slew the one who came up next, and again sent to join them a third brother, goring the remainder with thrusts in

their sides, till they retired on their rear, and hurried towards Kelboon to demand his assistance.

When Kelboon saw this dreadful event, he rushed upon Antar. He galloped, charged, and assaulted; soon laboured amongst them the blow, and the thrust from the sword and the spear. At this moment the thousand opposed to Nazih were routed; for Antar's reinforcement reached him in good time, and strengthened his courage and resolution. We have already mentioned all he felt in his heart for his dear Dhymia. So he scattered heads like balls, and hands like leaves of trees, and by mid-day he had dispersed them over the barren waste. Next were repulsed the troops that were opposed to Oorwah; they too were dispersed over the land, death and destruction came upon them.

Now then, cried Obad to his tribe, now congratulate yourselves on victory, in the arrival of your Knight Nazih, accompanied by this Absian party. Now turn again upon the foe with firm purpose, and protect your women from every foreign invader.

All the horsemen gave an universal shout, and the freeborn and the slaves attacked, and made great havoc and slaughter. The sword ceased not to act, nor blood to flow, nor men to fight, nor the flame of battle to rage, till the tribe of Arcat was completely cut up, when Nazih and his comrades sought the tents with Oorwah, where they were all crowded together; and thus they continued their

work of death. But Antar and Kelboon were occupied in the thrust, and the assault, and the skull-cleaving blow.

Antar, being anxious speedily to conclude this difficult affair, pretended being exhausted. This increased Kelboon's fury, and he thrust at him with his spear, in the hope of annihilating him. Antar waited patiently till the spear came close to his chest, when he shivered it with his sword, and rushing upon Kelboon, struck him on the side of the neck, and his sword issued quivering through the joints. Upon this the tribe of Arcat assailed Antar from all sides, shouting, Alas! alas! Kelboon! But Antar also cried out to his men, and he encountered them, piercing their chests and their eyes, and making their blood stream down with his spear. Asyed perceived him; the pride of glory was roused in him; his joy and delight were complete, and seeing that the business was now rendered easy, he attacked with the remaining horsemen, and plunged among the foe with his sword and spear. Now fled the tribe of Arcat, and Antar in pursuit like an overwhelming destruction, the blood trickling from his scimitar and lance.

Shiboob caught up the head of Kelboon, and stuck it on a tall spear, and ran on till he came near the tribe of Arcat. For whom would ye now remain to fight? he exclaimed; Behold the head of your Chief Kelboon! With that he mounted the head on high towards them, and when they recog-

nised it they dispersed over the wastes and the wilds. And God made security succeed to fears with the tribe of Cayan. They all dismounted before Antar, and walked towards him. Nazih also dismounted, and pressed Obad to mount, but he refused, saying, O my son, who are these noble people? My Lord, said Nazib, these are of the tribe of Abs, whom the Arabs call the Knights of death and instant destruction, and the cause of my acquaintance with them is an extraordinary event; for their Prince is my father, and their parentage is mine.

Thus he related to him all that had happened to him on his expedition. Obad was exceedingly surprised: By the faith of an Arab, said he, this is indeed a story unequalled in the world; and truly I hated the Absians on account of what my father told me of them, but now, my son, it is incumbent on us that our men become their slaves, and our women their handmaidens; but which of them is your father? Nazih pointed to Asyed—he who has the standard over his head, he replied; the lord of the embroidered robe. Obad ran eagerly up to Asyed, and kissed his foot in the stirrup: Had I known this youth, who is among us, I would have made him lord over the tribe of Cayan; but He who is unseen is wonderful, and is the Author of all things. You alone deserve well of me and my companions, replied Asyed, kissing his head, and we must partake in all your disgraces and your honours; and had we done for you two-fold of what we have

effected, we could not have requited you for your acts in educating my son among the Arabs; but we request of you to marry him to your daughter Dhymia, that we may be allied and connected, for you are an eminent chieftain, and we are the princes of the Arabs; and all of us are men of high renown and degree. One like me, returned Obad, expressing his obedience, must be honoured with such good fortune. Asyed thanked him.

Now when they came nigh to the dwellings, the women and slaves met them. Nazih's mother had heard of her son's return, and observed him engaged with the enemy. She could scarcely believe he was come back. She kissed him, and inquired how he was. He acquainted her with his having discovered his father. The Almighty God has restored him to us; a tribe of Absians is come with me, and it is by them that this affliction has been removed. Then was her joy increased, and all sorrow and grief were dead within her heart. She looked upon her husband Asyed, and immediately recognising him, she walked up to him, and tendered her services; and when he saw her, he dismounted and embraced her. Every one of them was now united to his friends; they wept and talked over the horrors they had endured, and wept again.

Before evening the tribe of Abs had pitched their tents, and wine and meat were served up to them. The tribe of Cayan treated them very hospitably, and in the morning some slaves came from Obad to

Asyed with generous steeds, and horses, and spears, and scimitars; he also sent to Nazih's mother fifty party-coloured robes, and also fifty maidens, bearing valuable jewels in their hands; and before the day was passed and the night came on in obscurity, Nazih's mother had absolute command over the tribe of Cayan, after all the afflictions and ignominy she had suffered among them. Soon after Asyed prepared a magnificent entertainment, and assembled all the tribe and families. The tribes of Abs and Cayan made obeisance to Antar, and thanked him for what he had done present or absent. The feast lasted three days, and then Asyed requested Obad to marry his daughter to his son; he assented. My daughter will indeed execute her part, said he, but my heart is under severe apprehensions on account of this tyrant whose son you have slain; for I am well aware the flame will not be quenched in him, and he will not submit; and as soon as the fugitives arrive, and notify his son's death, he will march against us with incalculable numbers, for his armies are like the seas, and his country is the most savage of countries; and if he comes he will leave our habitations a desert wild. O Obad, said Antar, we will not quit this country till we have bound this tyrant by the neck for you, and I will make every one in the whole country subject to you. So enjoy your present happiness, and let it not be tainted with sorrow, whilst I go with one hundred men and annihilate Nacmah, son of Ashter, for not one will

I leave alive of his tribe. O Aboolfawaris, exclaimed Obad, in amazement at Antar's expressions, these are not like the people you have hitherto engaged; their country is most extensive, and they are as numerous as the sands. I had better write to my confederates. Let us all march together to the mountain of the Volcano; there let us exert our endeavours to extirpate this monster; for if he demands the ransom of his son, he must prevail. What say you, Obad? said Antar: by the truth of Him who created mankind, and infused life into our bodies, I will not march but with two hundred horsemen of the tribe of Carad, and no one shall accompany me but Oorwah and my father Shedad, let them be as numerous as Themood and Aad. Heaven protect us! ejaculated Asyed and Obad. At such imprecations they were stupefied, and no one could venture a reply. At last, said Asyed, O knight of the age, verily thou hast sworn by an oath that was not required; and if indeed we are able to accomplish this, we will not acquiesce in thy proposal. But, O my cousin, if it must be so, let it be; do as thou wilt; march to-morrow, and we will join thee in two or three days, for we cannot permit thee to enter a country of which thou art ignorant with this small body. It is for thee to command, said Antar, but I had much rather execute this business without them; and I trust you will not join me till I have performed my engagement. This passed in the evening, and the people retired to their

tents. As soon as the darkness had passed away, Antar sent Shiboob for his father Shedad, and Oorwah, and selecting from the Absians two hundred horsemen, he bade adieu to Asyed and Nazih, traversing the plains and the deserts; and when Antar was alone, he thought of Ibla. It was now a long time that he had not seen her in his sleep, at which he was nearly dead through grief; he was exceedingly distressed, and in his passion he thus spoke: "My virtues are enemies to the world, and my "actions are faults and disgraces. My lot is eternal "separation from my love, but the lot of others is "to approach her. Every day the world renews its "reproaches on account of my fondness, and I have "no physician for my body. The world is enamoured "of my mistress, as if I were its rival. If my ima-"gination, O Ibla, has deceived me, let my heart "die insulted, for death is sweeter to me than life, "when it is my beloved that oppresses me. How "can I go or pass the deserts, when the west and the "south winds contend to check me? O breeze of "Hidjaz, if thou dost not quench the fire of my "heart, my frame must melt with the heat. Truly "the dove mourns on the bough, and its plaints "and murmurs distress me; it remains wailing its "separation from its mate, and laments itself as a "lonely stranger. But I pour forth sighs from my "burthened heart, that even the most wretched cries "at it, 'Heaven protect me!' O dove of the bough, "if thou wert like me, thou wouldst not rest under

" the green branches. Leave their love and passion
" for the real lover, whose heart is ever in torment,
" whom fortune punishes every day, when any one
" addresses him. O anguish interminable! O cala-
" mity that will never cease! Ask the herald con-
" cerning me. O Ibla, ask the brave man, grown
" gray in battle. He will tell thee, that on the edge
" of my sword sits the king of death, ever present
" and never absent. My spear, on the day of thrusts,
" knows me. Ask it then, what will joy thy heart,
" how many warriors approached me, each crying
" out, O by my tribe, I am a noble hero! but he
" never returned, but he bit the ground, and his
" garments were rent from him. My sword laughs
" in my hand, but in another's grasp it would weep.
" In the dark shadow of my spear is my parentage;
" and my black complexion, when it is questioned,
" gives the reply. It protects me in the day of spear-
" thrusts, as one noble-born defends his fellow. They
" forbid me from drinking cups of wine, with damsels
" scented with musk and perfumes; they compel
" me to hold up the skirt of glory, what even the
" contemptible coward would renounce."

As soon as Antar had finished his verses, his father's heart pitied him, and compassionated his situation, and so also did Oorwah and his people. They urged on their march, till they reached the land of the tribe of Arcat. As to Nacmah, after he had despatched his son, Kelboon, he remained expecting news of him, and hoping that he would soon

return with Dhymia, Obad's daughter, but he was not aware that fortune had belied her former habits with him, and had, instead of her, sent Antar. Thus it continued with him, till the fugitives arrived and announced his son's death. Accursed! ye wretches! he roared out, ye went with seven thousand horsemen, and has this calamity befallen you at the hands of the tribe of Cayan? And have ye left my son dead on the desert? My lord, one named Masrook ventured to say, by your life, this did not come upon us from the tribe of Cayan. We had nearly effected their destruction, and had driven them to their tents, but three hundred horsemen of Hidjaz rushed upon us, on whose spears sat death, and with them was a black knight like a thunder-cloud; he understood no address; he made no reply; but he thrust his spear through chests and ribs; he wrenched out eyes, tore out entrails, and repelled affliction from the tribe of Cayan, and he gored us in our rear, till he drove us far away, and I should say that he was even now at our heels. Nacmah permitted him not to finish his tale, before he smote him with his sword, and off flew his head. Bring before me these fugitives, he cried to his attendants, and they accordingly seized them, and dragged them before him, and he struck off their heads till the strength of both his arms was exhausted. Now he had a brother whose name was Niamet, and when he saw his brother's outrageous conduct, he advanced towards him; he took the sword out of his hand,

and calmed his rage and fury. This Niamet was the reverse of his brother, he was a kind-hearted man, and one to whom people referred in their troubles; hating oppression and violence. He was ever checking his brother, and requesting him to abstain from his hateful acts towards his people, and to be just to his subjects, warning him of the consequences. But Nacmah would never listen to his discourse, and would not even deign an answer; and on this day, when he prevented him from slaying his companion, and took the sword out of his hand, saying, How oft have I checked you, and you still indulge in this fury? And now fortune has struck you with affliction, with respect to your son Kelboon"—Nacmah was confounded with horror, and his eyeballs started into the crown of his head; every one that saw him shuddered. Well, how oft wilt thou reprove me for my actions, cried he to his brother, and oppose the accomplishment of my desires? I am the king of the universe, and I will indulge the lust of my heart; if thou darest again to come into my sight, I will despoil thee of thy life, and I will strike off thy head. Upon this, Niamet mounted his horse and went home, and his heart was full of grief at what had happened with his brother. In that quarter, he had with him three thousand heroes, the best of the tribe, all obeying his orders, and detesting his brother Nacmah, on account of his insolent pride. As soon as Niamet returned to them, he told them what his brother had done to him, and

how he had struck off the heads of the fugitives. Never return to him, cried they all, highly incensed; raise not up your head to him again, consider him no longer as a human being. I must, said Niamet, destroy this monster. I will depart into the interior, and will collect all the Arabs whose daughters he has seized, and will excite the horsemen against him, and I will not desist till I have destroyed him, and I am relieved from this infamy and contempt. First of all, I will try these Absians who slew his son Kelboon; for I have heard they have a knight as good as a thousand, and that the warriors of the earth cannot stand before him, and I will ask their aid against this dæmon. It is expedient that you let us march this very night, said one, and let it not be morning before we have traversed the wastes and the wilds. He instantly ordered his slaves to move off; he struck his tents, and so did his cousins, and it was not night before they were all on horseback, and were traversing the deserts under the shades of darkness.

CHAPTER XXVII.

But as to Nacmah, son of Ashtar, I will positively exterminate the whole tribe of Cayan, cried he to his people, I will sacrifice their women and their children; then will I march into the land of Hidjaz, and put to the sword the tribe of Abs, who have slain my son. He reposed till day dawned, when he sent to the tribes of Riyah, and Sabah, Washah, and Atbool, and Barik, and Shamrack, and ordered them to march with all expedition; for these tribes were subject to him, and feared his cruelty. Their residences were round the mountain of volcano, and all had adopted the worship of the Moon. This mountain was one of the phenomena of the All-merciful Lord, for there incessantly issued from it something like a black cloud, and whenever the new moon rose, from this mountain burst forth groans, and sparks of fire flew forth. It was a black mountain, and no one was able to ascend it, and iron could not have any effect on its stony sides. An historian has noticed it, saying, The Lord God has been angry with this mountain, ever since he created the world at first, and at the consum-

mation it will be the stone-work of hell. In one of my excursions I ascended it, and I saw within it terrific wonders; its summit is divided in two, and in the centre is a sea of fire, that never subsides, but day and night it rolls in waves of flame; and on it are angels of wrath, and stern enormous monsters, that are never weary, but are continually stationed for its punishment by the will of the omnipotent God. But let us return to our story, and to Nacmah. As soon as the tribes came to him, he was also informed that his brother had marched away with his property, in order to assemble the Arabs against him; And he will, they said, conduct against you the tribes from the surrounding regions, and will requite you for your contemptuous conduct towards him. Ah! I am foiled, cried Nacmah, for I should have cut off his head, and thus I should have been at ease; but I will pursue him, and put to the sword all his companions. He instantly ordered his slaves to proclaim the march, and early in the forenoon all the tribes had mounted, as well his allies as his attendants, and he ordered them to pursue his brother and his companions, directing them to take a vast supply of horses, and arms, and armour, and coats of mail, and before mid-day they had quitted the land, and they continued traversing the wastes and wilds in their march, till next day at sunrise, when they distinctly saw ahead of them a black dust. Behold

how fortune favours us, cried they all. Niamet was in company with his associates on the march, and when they were distant from home, and nigh unto the plains of Khidret, and the fountains of Hywan, he considered himself as secure. It was thus, when, on a sudden, arose the shouts in his rear, and the whole country was in agitation. He gazed attentively, and perceived the camp, and the troops and horsemen galloping over the desert, and various corps that cut off *all* communication, and every road. Niamet was certain his brother had overtaken him. O my cousins, said he, here is my brother, who has overtaken us, and our hostility has been discovered. I request of you to make some proper arrangement, and let no one call me 'Chief.' Comfort your heart, and brighten your eyes, said they, for there is not one of us that will shrink from the fight; every one of us will engage with the scimitar, and defend his wife and family. Then shaking their spears, they advanced to the battle and the contest, and at that moment approached Antar, son of Shedad. He beheld armies that filled the desert; he was exceedingly astonished. Gain some intelligence for us about these bold armies, cried he to Shiboob, for I perceive troops are preparing for battle.

Shiboob set his feet forward, and coming up with the companions of Niamet, O Arabs, he exclaimed, tell me what is your kindred, and what is your business?—What want you of us, young man?

asked Niamet himself; we are a tribe flying from a tyrant, and he is in our rear, seeking to destroy us, and capture our women. He is Nacmah, son of Ashtar; but you, who are ye? Explain to me, perhaps by your means this trouble may be removed from us.—Congratulate yourself, O Arab, replied Shiboob, on the annihilation of Nacmah, and the arrival of relief, for we are come purposely against him. We are those who slew his son Kelboon, and we are come to send him to bear his son company, and pull down his dwellings over his head; but as to your question about our parentage, we are a tribe from the land of Hidjaz.

On hearing this, joy infused itself into the heart of Niamet, and he felt assured all his troubles would be satisfactorily settled. O my brother, said he to Shiboob, were it not for these troops that have overtaken us, I would go with you to pay my respects to your companions; but the time presses upon us. Return to your party, and relate what you have heard, and assure them of wealth and success in their enterprise; and when he is slain, we will return home. Shiboob returned to Antar, and informed him of the news; much delighted, he said to his father Shedad, I am afraid there may be some plot against us; and when we are among the two parties, said he, it is possible they may turn upon us the troops on both sides.—We, said Shedad, shall not meet them, but with the firm

resolution to fight. My opinion is, you should attack their right, and we their left; probably we may thus terminate our labours, and return home.

Antar alone assaulted their right, Shiboob going ahead; and the troops of Niamet closed upon them, transfixing them with their spears. The armies were thronged together, and the flame of war blazed. Necks were cleft by the sword—armour was clotted with gore—hope itself became despair; chests were pierced with the spear, and souls fled from bodies; while skulls flew about on all sides, or were rolled along the plain. As soon as the black lion attacked, the renowned hero, the invincible warrior, the knight of the battle and contest, the serpent of the centre of the valley, the Chief Antar, son of Shedad—he alone burst through the right, though more than a thousand horsemen opposed him, and with his cleaving falchion he struck horror into their hearts. On that day Shiboob assisted him with his arrows: the troops again attempted an attack; he turned upon them, and dispersed them; and he did not desist from his assault till he scattered them over the desert, and filled the whole country with the dead. Thus also did Oorwah and his father Shedad, and the Absians; they completely destroyed the left by their terrible attacks. Niamet and his men observed their battle and their actions, and were astounded at their deeds, observing in

them what they could not comprehend. The battle continued to rage in every quarter till the armies of night came on; when the two hostile forces separated and dismounted.

Nacmah's troops retreated, for they were totally routed, and there was not one but talked of the tribe of Abs and their deeds. Eh! cried Nacmah, assembling his companions about him, with such hearts would ye wish to go with me into the land of Hidjaz, and encounter its heroes in the combat? Here one knight with three hundred men has overthrown you, and these stern fellows have annihilated you.—O Chief, said they, do not reproach us, for this day we saw, with your brother, horsemen, whom had we seen in a dream we should have been horror-struck: we know not whence they come. Perhaps you beheld the knight who attacked on the left, how he crushed it; how he roared out to the right, and dispersed it. If you blame us for this, you are no wise man. On hearing this, his rage became dreadful. I had resolved to attack them in person, he bellowed out, and with my single power to remove this evil from you; but I was afraid of shame and reproaches, for truly men of high dignity may scorn me on this account. But I must clear my honour now that this catastrophe has befallen us, and I will not endure the insults of living man. To-morrow I will disguise myself, and I will sally forth into the plain, and I will engage my-

self in fight, in the scene of the spear-thrusts; and for every one of that tribe I will slay another of you also, so that not one of you must retreat or quit the battle unless he be covered with wounds.

When his comrades heard this, they were alarmed for the fate that awaited them, and they remained expecting the daylight. But as to the Absians and Niamet's troop, the women and young damsels were in agonies of fear, alarmed for their husbands and chiefs, as soon as the tribe of Arcat approached them, and surrounded them on all sides. They continued weeping and lamenting, in dread of captivity and separation, till the moment they saw the Absians, and the deeds they performed, and how they environed the troops right and left. At this their hearts were composed, and they thanked the omniscient Creator. Niamet ordered his slaves to slaughter deer and sheep, and the women prepared the repast; and before evening the horsemen being returned to the tents, they took their food.

Antar, having mangled the right and left, went to his father Shedad, and Oorwah, and his men, and found them all safe from peril, for they only lost seven men: he congratulated the rest on their safety. Niamet advanced towards him, and saluting them all, received them with honour: he walked before them till they came to the tents, where he

made them dismount at their dwellings, among their wives and daughters. But Antar declined, and alighted with his party without their tents; so they supplied them with victuals, and Niamet stood amongst the slaves, to attend on them: but Antar perceiving him arose, and taking him by the hand, made him sit down by his side, saying, Do not so, young man; eat with us, and feel assured of success. Know that we entered this country for our own concerns only, and we did not come without reasonable grounds. And he gave him a full account of Nazih's adventure, at which Niamet was exceedingly surprised, remarking the wondrous changes of fortune. The tribe of Abs rose still higher in his estimation, and he said within himself, Doubtless these horsemen are the wonders of the Genii, for they have marched against my brother with these two hundred horsemen. Now, O Arab, said he to Antar, if you slay my brother, and complete my wishes, I will submit myself as a slave to the tribe of Cayan, and I will for ever live their servant. I consent that the country be yours, and all the wealth therein.—By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, I never in all my life took a bribe for an honourable action; and now we will only consider you as independent, and our friend, for our possessions are great, and our property abundant. But, by him who ordered us to make a pilgrimage to the sacred shrine, I must make thy brother drink

of the cup of death. By to-morrow's dawn I will assail him, and I will strike off his head from between his shoulders: I will make thee lord over all his property and possessions, and I will put to death his adherents and friends.

When they had finished their dinner, they hasted to repose; and as soon as the day arose in smiles, they hurried to the battle and the combat. Do you and your comrades, said Antar to Niamet, betake yourselves to the left, and leave us the right; and if you find yourselves unable to sustain the combat, retire from before them for a few steps only, so that the troops may pursue you, and rush with avidity among you: but when I look towards you, and you are engaged with them, I will sally out against them, and will plunder their souls. Niamet highly approved the plan: he separated towards the left, and quitted the Absians.

When the tribe of Arcat saw this manœuvre, they were alarmed for Nacmah. O my cousins, cried Antar to his friends, know that this affair is a mere trifle; be assured of victory and conquest. Attack with me, that we may attempt the lord of the great standard, on which is the form of the moon, for King Nacmah is beneath it, and if we do not slay him we shall not succeed in our expectations.

Antar had scarcely finished when the foe attacked.

Then too the Knight of the swarthy Abs went to work, and fell among the enemy like inevitable fate. The battle commenced; the heroes stood firm against the spear-thrust and the sword-blow—the warriors turned upon each other—the men assaulted —all headed by Antar, the ravenous lion. The spear-barbs laboured on the backs of the tribe of Arcat like sparks of fire. Certain of death and destruction, they dispersed over the wastes. Nacmah sought out his brother in the battle, but the party met him like the waves of the ocean; fear and horror seized him, and he attempted to fly, when lo! Antar rushed against the standard-bearer, and piercing him through the heart, hurled him off his horse, and then made at Nacmah, to overwhelm him also in death. He fled, for he felt his death certain: still Antar drove at him, and smote him on the head with his sword; he cleft it even to the girdle of his garment. He poured destruction upon the tribe of Arcat, and let loose an overwhelming calamity upon them. In fine, every one that knew of the death of Nacmah immediately returned under allegiance to his brother Niamet, and sought his protection; and those who ran away at first fled home.

Before mid-day Niamet possessed a valiant army, and over his head waved the standards and ensigns. The whole camp came towards him, and marched before him till they reached the tribe of Abs.

Niamet was about to dismount, but Antar checked him, and kissed him between the eyes. Niamet kissed Antar's two hands, and extolling him, requested his protection; and peace was concluded between him and the Chief Obad, and terms were arranged.

And when they were about to proceed each to his country, Niamet turned towards Antar, saying, Aboolfawaris, I request you will do me a favour.—Speak your wishes, said Antar, and say what you want.—I swear, said Niamet, by the faith of an Arab, not an article of my property, great or small, that came with me, shall return with me: but do not reprove your slave for its inadequacy.—No, by the duty of an Arab, exclaimed Antar, not even a halter shall follow me of yours. But if you have any other enemy, tell me, that I may go against him, and extinguish his life, and may ease you of his iniquity.—Besides my brother, said Niamet, I have not a foe; and if I had, you ought to return home. So take some of my camels, that are unequalled in all lands; very patient they are in traversing the deserts, and they are not to be had in the land of Hidjaz. Upon this, two thousand she camels were put aside, all with large overlapping humps: they were given over to a hundred men and as many women slaves, who were ordered to drive them before Antar, son of Shedad, the Knight of the dust and the fight.

This done, Niamet and his subjects returned home, and Antar, with his comrades, set out for the land of the tribe of Cayan. That day they remained in the desert, and the next till mid-day; when lo! there arose a dust ahead of them, and they discovered the tribe of Cayan, commanded by the Chief Nazih, and his father Asyed, and the Chief Obad. They advanced, and the heroes saluted each other. Obad came forward; he kissed Antar's hand, and inquired what had passed. Antar recounted the whole; at which the Arab chieftains were in amazement, and they returned to the dwellings of the tribe of Cayan.

About this time rose the moon of Redjib, which the Arabs held sacred, hostilities were checked: men and women were secure during that season. Arrived, they married Dhymia to Nazih, and they passed that month in feasts and entertainments. Asyed also took away his wife, and soon they set out on their way to their own country. Obad bade them adieu, and returned home with his troops, whilst Antar continued his march over the desert; and as his love and passion for Ibla seized him, he thus expressed himself:

"I march, and in my heart is a flame and a fire, "and I point towards home in my eager love—I "languish for thee; so understand that I am weak, "and thoughts only are alive. I march over the "desert adoring her, and in my heart are hell-

"flames and fiery tortures. O Ibla, I have encountered warriors, from the thrust of whose spears gushes out blood; but I have dispersed them with the spear-thrust, till I have left them to be dried up on the earth in the deserts. I have killed Kelboon before Nacmah, and I have abandoned them as dried flesh on the ground. I die, and revive every day and night; for captive lovers there is no rescue. Fortune and time have favoured Nazih, a youth skilled in the spear-thrust, and tried in war. O mountain of volcano, ever be in hell-flames—ever be thy food the infernal fire! and thou, O Mount Saadi, mayst thou ever be my home, and mayst thou ever be moistened with rain; there is my home; in every hour I languish for it; there is my beloved, from whom no captive can break loose. But I have endured in patience this lengthened absence. May God now unite us! He alone is omnipotent!"

At hearing Antar's verses, there was not one but thanked him and praised him, and they travelled night and day till they came nigh unto the defiles of the passage where Khalid was concealed, and of which he had taken possession, in order to succeed in his attempts upon Antar, having stationed scouts and advanced posts. Antar arrived about nightfall, and halted by a lake on the Yemen side; as soon as the outposts saw his dust, they came to Khalid, and informed him. He was overjoyed;

but waiting till the night was quite darkened over, he sent out a slave to obtain intelligence. He departed, and returned about midnight, saying, It is the Absians, and with them is Antar: so prepare your companions for the battle and the combat. As to Antar, as soon as the men had rested, and the horses and camels had eaten their provender, he said to Shiboob, Order the slaves to load the baggage, and let us move.

Shiboob quitted him, and made the proclamation in conformity with his brother's orders, and in an hour the men were mounted, and the slaves had loaded the camels, and they set out over the country till they reached the defile. About an hour before daylight they stopped at the head of the pass, when the slaves were ordered to drive the cattle before them: so the he and she camels, and the howdahs, and the baggage, were driven forward, and entered the defile. As soon as Khalid saw this, and perceived the baggage-camels, and behind one hundred horsemen with Shiboob to protect them, letting them pass till Antar appeared with Shedad, and Asyed, and Nazih, he shouted to his comrades, and they assaulted in every direction, brandishing their barbed spears and their scimitars, and rushing upon them in the obscurity of darkness. The first that engaged Antar was Rebia, son of Ocail: he made a murderous thrust at Antar, but he grasped his cleaving Dhami, and striking the spear, clipped

it off; then aiming at him with his sword, he cut through his helm, and smote him on the crown of his head, depriving him of his senses, and before he could recover himself, Shiboob sprang upon him and bound him fast by the shoulders, and pinioned his arms and sides.

Jandah attacked Nazih, followed by his horsemen: they were all so crowded in the defile, and so thick rose the dust, that it was impossible to distinguish friend from foe. Rebia being secured, Antar vigilantly looked after himself, as he continued to pierce the chests of the heroes. But Shiboob, when he had bound fast Rebia, returned to seek for Jandah: he had almost overpowered Nazih, when Shiboob met him, and struck his horse with an arrow: he threw him off, and Jandah being hurled over from his height, Nazih was about to dismount, but Shiboob anticipated him, saying, Do not trouble yourself, O Chief; do not dismount, for the game belongs to him who first struck it down, and besides I understand such business much better than you. So saying, he ran up to him and tied down his arms.

The Absians then came on, issuing from the defile. They extended their spears, and the battle and the contest grew fiercer: their bodies were covered with wounds, and blood streamed over the sands. Antar slew of the tribe of Aamir those whose death was at hand, and whose departure was ordained.

Khalid observed the defeat, and repented of what he had done; but they continued the engagement till the day dawned, when the tribe of Aamir being completely discomfited, took to flight; and Khalid, feeling aware of his death and destruction, had no resource but deceit and stratagem. So he cast away his spear out of his hand, and returning his sword to its scabbard, urged the speed of his horse Caasa, that had belonged to King Zoheir, till he came up to Antar, exclaiming, Hold, in the name of God! O Arab, I see my mistake, truly rapacity has excited our men, and the horrors of war have visited them; they attacked your property in the dark, but vengeance has overtaken them—they arose to engage you before they made inquiries of you, but their treachery has swiftly laid them low, and the great and mean have been slain: but, O Arab, I am their Chief, and on me ought to fall the blame and the reproach; but, O hero, I demand of you in the name of Him who raised the heavens, that you tell me to what Arabs you belong, and that you order your companions to withhold the sword-blow till the morning brightens, when perhaps our dissension may terminate in peace. Know too, that the daylight will demonstrate this fact, and the Cahtanian will be distinguished from the Adnanian.

Antar, on hearing this, acquiesced, and seeing that he had thrown away his spear, instantly despatched Shiboob, ordering him to withdraw the

Absians from the tribe of Aamir, and to tell the tribe what Khalid, the chief of the fugitives, had said, and to prohibit them from thrusting and striking. O Arab, exclaimed Antar to Khalid, as to your demand about our parentage, we are of the noble tribe of Abs, and I am Antar, son of Shedad; our leader is the Chief Asyed, son of Jazeemah, and wherefore have you exposed us to this disgraceful transaction? I have been absent in the land of Yemen on an affair that interested our chiefs. I went and I slew their foes, and with my sword I have overturned their power. I exerted myself, that my promise might be fulfilled. Having finished all my business, I am now on my way to my family and tribe. But what is it you mean by your questions? Woe! woe, O Aboolfawaris, said Khalid, how is it you have concealed all this from us, so that evil at your hands is come upon us? How has misfortune fallen on us from a tribe most dear to us! Truly my love for you would have increased, and in my heart would have been your glory and honour, had not this cruel affair cut asunder the connexion between us. What relationship is there between us and you? said Antar in the greatest astonishment, and what parentage? Hear, O champion of the tribe of Abs, said Khalid, for I will relate to you what has occurred during your absence, when you were in the lands of Yemen: but be not too much distressed at what you have done to my people, and that you have brought destruction

upon them, for we commenced the insult, and we were the origin of the violence, and truly I will forgive you the blood of those who have been slain out of regard to your Chief Zoheir, whom may Lat and Uzza keep in holy remembrance! for his liberality was universally aknowledged by us all, and in him we have found a strong tower and a defender. The reason of this is, that I met him at Mecca at the holy shrine, and between him and me was formed mutual faith and engagement, and when we returned from the pilgrimage, I bound myself to him, and took him with me to the tribe of Aamir (for I am their Chief Khalid, son of Giafer); I made him and his sons alight with me in the middle of the tents, and I offered them all that was in my power, in the way of hospitality, for the space of ten days, and they did not quit me till between them and us relationship was confirmed: for Zoheir, whom may Lat and Uzza ever guard in holy remembrance! demanded my daughter Beder-ool-Hoolel for his son Shas, and gave us things incalculable, such as no human being possesses: he also did not depart till he had given me his charger Caasa, and it is this I have under me; and he girt me on this his sword, which is now slung over my shoulders, and its name is Zeenoor: he left us praising him and full of obligations, and when he departed, I took with me a thousand horsemen of my tribe, and I am now on my way to the land of Yemen, that I may procure jewels, and robes, and

articles no King of Yemen possesses. We halted in this spot but yesterday evening, and in the morning we resolved on marching, when you arrived with your baggage-camels, and your slaves were driving them. As soon as my party saw them, they considered them as some plunder of the inhabitants of Yemen. Their avidity excited them to seize on them, and thus it all happened.

When Antar heard Khalid's narrative, and saw King Zoheir's charger under him, and his sword over his shoulder, he was confounded for a reply, and hung his head to the ground in excess of shame, and he knew not what to do.

Khalid, on seeing this, felt certain that by his artifice and deceit, the stratagem and manœuvre had had its effect, so he did not cease his villany till he dismounted and did homage to Antar, saying, May God be ever with thee; grieve not, O champion of Abs; repent not, for unwittingly you have acted thus; the fault was ours, and on us has fallen the loss. And Khalid wished to kiss his feet; but Antar dismounted: My lord, said he, death would be more tolerable to me than this act; but a liberal man pardons a slave when he perceives the apology is sincere.

The Absians came up and heard all Khalid said, and they did as Antar had done; and Antar cried out to the slaves to release the prisoners they had in charge, amongst whom were Jandah, son of Beca, and Rebia, son of Ocail, and others of the

Aamir horsemen. The whole came up to Antar and made their excuses. Peace was concluded, and Khalid rescued his friends by this deceit and stratagem, and as they took leave of each other, said Khalid, Make my compliments to my brother, King Zoheir; and he went off with the Aamirites, hardly crediting their escape. As to the Absians, they continued traversing the desert on their way home. Antar went ahead, and when his love and pensiveness overcame him, he began thus:

"O tamarisk of the mountains, is there one to "report of me—to tell the state of a lover—one "distracted and melancholy? Mention then, in the "name of God, ye northern breezes; the honours "and glories I have attained; tell Ibla that, for "her sake, I have encountered horrors of the most "eminent hazard; that I have endured dreadful "scenes, and have returned triumphant, and the "foe, in terror of me, dared not to appear before "me. O Ibla, by thy life, couldst thou but see "Antar amongst the armies and contending mul- "titudes, and the horse tearing down towards me "at the head of the defile, like the tempestuous "rain, in the battle, destroyer of joys. They come "on the backs of swift high-mettled steeds, some "black, like the winds when they rush forth, some "red, some white, and some piebald. I shout at "them with an Absian shout, like thunder, that "thrills through the whole army. I charge towards "them, and I gallop at them, and I storm them with

" the chest of Abjer. I make them taste of sword-
" blows, and terrible spear-thrusts, with my cutlass
" and the barb of my lance. I make them like the
" harvest, as if they were the roots of date trees,
" deeply interwoven in the rocks. I have dyed the
" face of the land with their blood, and it has be-
" come like the crimson cornelian. The gore, like
" a rolling sea of Judas flowers, resembles a bursting
" river. O Ibla, couldst thou but behold my
" achievements against the foe on the day of battle,
" in my force and my impetuosity, and my arms,
" like the Judas tree, and my Abjer dyed with the
" blood of every lion-hero. It is then I cry out from
" beneath the forest of spears, whilst the dust and
" black volumes of sand encompass me. O, by Abs,
" I am the stubborn one among men, I will annihilate
" horsemen with my cleaving scimitar. It is then
" I dart from beneath the dust, and my coat of mail
" is like the piony, and as if painted with saffron.
" I have slain Jabir, and Hosein, and also the
" voracious lion Ebeleshbal. I have left Masood
" and Amroo in the desert, on the ground, and
" Nabih, son of Ashter; also Kelboon and his father,
" called Nacmah the tyrant, the oppressor; and
" Soheib, him have I made to drink of the cup of
" death on the lofty towering mountains. Them
" all I have destroyed with the hewing blows of my
" polished, my irresistible Dhami. Their property
" I have seized, their plunder I have taken, and the
" deserts are filled with the incalculable booty. As
" to the troops of horsemen in the valley, there does

"not survive of them one to tell the tale. The "heroes can witness for me in the contest, that I "am the lion—the devouring warrior: not a knight "like me has arrived at the highest glory, durable "for ages. My mother is Zebeeba, I disavow not "her name, and I am Antar; but I am not vain-"glorious: her dark complexion sparkles like a "sabre in the shades of night, and her shape is "like the well-formed spear. I am the son of Shedad, "and my lineage is Absian, known above the bril-"liant canopy of heaven. I have attained honour, "glory, and fame, by my resolution, so that I am in "the vicinity of Jupiter. Were death to see me, "ay to see me, he would turn aside from me, in "fear of my tempestuous might and power. I am "sublime above all knights in the field of fight, by "my intrepidity, by my modesty and forbearance."

When Antar had finished his verses, they all cried, May God never abandon thy mouth, may there never be one to harm thee, O hero of the age, thou champion of the tribe of Abs and Adnan! They continued their march till they came near to the land of Shoorebah and Mount Saadi, and when they turned their eyes toward their homes, and saw the desert in tumult with the glitter of armour, and the concourse of people, and wailing lamentations, Antar was startled, and so were his companions. Doubtless some evil has befallen our families in our absence, he cried, for the whole tribe is in the utmost affliction. Now when Cais had returned home, after the death of his father, the whole land was convulsed

with weeping and clamorous sorrow. Their grief for Zoheir continued long. The tents and the dwellings of the tribe of Abs were thrown down, and re-echoed to the groans and sobs of the mourners. The people met them, and seated themselves, with Cais, on the carpet of affliction. The tribes of Fazarah, and Ghiftan, and Marah, and Dibyan, all attended, with their friends and allies; they let their turbans hang loose over their necks, and rent all the garments they had on. But when they had condoled with Cais for his father, they congratulated him on the kingdom that had fallen to him. Congratulate me not on my kingdom, said he; there is no joy till you see that I have had my revenge. Comfort your heart, and brighten your eye, said the warriors, for we will not separate from you till we have avenged you. And they despatched their slaves to bring them their horses and their arms, and they remained preparing for the contest, whilst Cais every day rode out, gaining the hearts of the people, and showing every kindness to the warriors, giving them arms, and weapons, and corslets. His father, in his lifetime, had banished many of the Absians. Cais recalled them; he conciliated them, and made them return to their native land. But as to Rebia, son of Zeead, he had great influence with King Cais, for Cais had married his daughter, and he placed great confidence in him, in all his plans, and when Cais was making his preparations for his expedition to attack the tribe of Aamir, and had assembled his forces, said Hadifah, son of Beder, to him, Wait for

me ten days, till I write to my allies, the tribe of Marah; for their knight Harith, son of Zalim, is my relation by birth, and he is now the knight of the Arabs. My cousin, said King Cais, I have indeed heard marvels of this knight, and they raise him above Antar, son of Shedad. Who is Antar, said Rebia, O Cais, when Harith is present? Now then will he exhibit in his actions things that shall be recorded of him to eternity. So Hadifah wrote to Harith, requesting his assistance against the tribe of Aamir, having first stated all about King Zoheir, and the disgrace and infamy they had brought down upon him, and he despatched the letter by a horseman of Fazarah. This Harith was a confirmed impostor; he regarded no hospitality, neither did he respect any engagement. He never kept his word; he was a great depredator, and iniquitous in all his actions. If he associated with a friend, he would betray him; and if he could overreach an ally, he would put him to death. All the Arabs were on their guard against him, and his villany had been felt by every man alive, and moreover he could not be quiet with Antar; he stationed spies and scouts over him, and his very favours were malice and perfidy.

Khalid had also written to Harith to require his aid in his hostile preparations against the tribe of Abs, saying, O Harith, I have slain King Zoheir and his son Shas, and I am resolved not to leave them a tent standing. You know what their slave Antar did to your father Zalim, and how he cut his

hair off. If you are really what I have heard you to be, that you are active and zealous, haste then, that I may accomplish your every wish, and marry you to my daughter Sitularab. Harith acquiesced in the requisitions of Khalid's letter, and having assembled five hundred of the tribe of Marah, he resolved on the expedition. About that time also arrived Hadifah's messenger, and gave him the letter; to whom he said in his malignity and deceit, There was no occasion for your chief to write me a letter; I am now marching to his assistance, and shall probably have slain Khalid ere he arrives. He sent the messenger back that very day, and he himself set out for the tribe of Aamir. When they had proceeded some distance, O Harith, said his people, we wish you would tell us what is your real intention, and whom you will assist? My cousins, said he, march with me, and be sure of wealth, for these tribes are populous, and they must engage each other; and whichever we see will conquer, to that we will turn. But we wish, said they, you would inform us which you will join first? The tribe of Khalid, said he. And thus he continued his march with his comrades, and such was his resolution.

In the meantime Hadifah's messenger returned, and informed him that Harith had preceded him against the tribe of Aamir with five hundred horsemen. Away went Hadifah to King Cais: O King, said he, know that the man is wise and faithful; he is now gone to execute what we requested of him,

and he is already on his march to fight the Aamirites before us: it is my opinion we should join him, or he will sustain their attack alone. Do, my uncle, what you please, said Cais, and tell the Arabs to make ready their warlike weapons for the expedition on this very day. The Absians accordingly came forth with their arms; they slung on their spears, and were preparing to march, and at that very moment arrived Antar and Asyed with the horsemen; they stopped near the tents. The Absian warriors mounted to go and meet them; and amongst them were Malik, King Zoheir's son, Antar's friend, and his brother Harith by his side; and as soon as they saw their uncle Asyed and Antar they scattered dust over their heads, and let down the turbans over their necks.

But Antar, marking the conduct of King Zoheir's sons, shuddered, and was stupefied, for he thought they were occupied on Shas' happiness, as Khalid had informed him. He dismounted, and in great dismay, My lord, he said to Malik, what is the matter? O Aboolfawaris, said he, a calamity never to be forgotten, a misfortune that overwhelms both men and women. And he announced the death of his father King Zoheir, and his brother Shas. The colour of the swarthy Antar became wan and livid; he was nearly fainting. My lord, said he, dead? or killed? Killed, my cousin, said Prince Malik, and their enemies have triumphed over them; and then he told Antar how his father and brother were

slain, and what Khalid had done. Upon this, Antar also related his victory over the tribe of Aamir in the defile, and that he had taken more than two hundred prisoners, among whom were Rebia, son of Ocail, and Jandah, son of Beka, and that all were set free; and how Khalid had duped him by his stratagem and deceit. On hearing this, all King Zoheir's sons set up an universal shout of grief. O Aboolfawaris, said Prince Malik, it was that Jandah who slew my father. At this Antar's agony and transports were most intense. Woe, woe unto thee, O Khalid! he cried; by the faith of an Arab I will not leave thee but as a proverb for every one that stands and sits. His tears flowed in streams; his sobs and lamentations augmented; and thus he gave vent to his sorrows:

"O my eyes, shed showers of tears for the an-
"guish and calamities that have befallen me. Dry
"not on my cheeks, but flow in gushing torrents
"like the rain-charged clouds. O my woes, quit
"not my frame. O my agonies, leave not my body.
"O mourners of the tribe, weep and lament; mul-
"tiply your afflictions with sobs of sorrow and
"distress, for he is lost on whom I most relied for
"aid. Fear not the rebukes of the railers: he was
"my stay in every evil, and my sword when cala-
"mities flowed upon me. He was the refuge for
"the weak, and the asylum of the poor, who
"mourned in emaciating penury. He was a king
"to whom princes bowed down, and to whose

" power, the Arab chiefs submitted. O Zoheir,
" verily my spirit is broken. It was thou that didst
" repulse the foe, and every enemy from me. Alas!
" O race of Abs, thou hast lost thy glory; thy
" noble, thy merciful, and bountiful prince! Past
" away is thy benefactor! Thy days are darkened;
" now their light is gone, thy flame is extinguished
" in the obscurity of death. He was a full moon
" shining in its sublimity, and he was to me the
" most eminent of virtues. How indeed has the
" tribe of Aamir triumphed! Khalid exults and is
" proud of his conquest. Verily they have slain
" Shas, and he was a knight who was my succour
" in every adversity. Oh! I will weep for them as
" long as the birds shall sing, or the drops of the
" pouring clouds shall fall. I will take vengeance
" on the tribe of Aamir, who have revolted, and
" have vanquished these warriors. Khalid! Oh!
" I will make him drink with my sword the draught
" of the black gore in the midst of the heroes. I
" will exterminate the tribes with penetrating spear-
" thrusts, and tear out their hearts with sharp-
" edged scimitars. If I do not keep my word, may
" I never succeed in my wishes for a friend! Soon
" will I realize my project against them with my
" sabre; soon will I pull down their glories and
" their honours. I will leave among their dwell-
" ings nought but lamentations and shrieks of woe
" for the loss of friends! I am Antar, well known
" in war and battle, when I make the heroes fly

" terrified at death. But, alas! fortune has cast " me into affliction, and for the loss of Zoheir my " heart is melted !"

When the horsemen heard these verses they burst out into a loud expression of grief and affliction, and the creeping thrill of sorrow crawled over their bodies. They entered the tents, their heads exposed, and their clothes all torn. Rebia, old in villany, met them, saying, Cousins, men should assuage their grief, and soon resign their sorrows. Let not one of ye prolong his discourse, for this day is fixed for departure. It was Rebia's intention thus to add new anguish to the heart of Antar. He made him no reply, but he swelled with fury; his eyeballs glared red, till they became like two liquid globes of crimson blood; he roared and bellowed; his patience was spent; he struck Rebia on the chest, and hurled him on his back, and his helmet flew off from his head, and he was unable to utter a word. Antar repaired unto King Cais. At the entrance of the tent Antar stopped and wept; he sobbed and shrieked in excess of grief, as also Asyed; but Antar thus exclaimed:

" Set is the full moon, though once it was in its " zenith; hidden is its light, and all is dark. " Eclipsed is the sun, and the morn no more re- " turns in smiles. Fallen are the constellations; " they have disappeared; the atmosphere is ob- " scured; the dust of darkness is over it; all the " seas are hollow, and are sunk deep; we have lost

" its dews and its clouds. At the moment that Zo-
" heir fell dead infamy shrouded us, and sat upon
" us. Fortune has made him drink of the cup of
" death, but likewise fortune will be quick in its
" vengeance. He was my stay, my armour in ad-
" versity; he was my breastplate, my spear, my
" scimitar. O my eyes, when ye shed not tears,
" may sleep be denied ye! I swear by Him who
" slays and brings to life, by Him who rules the
" light and the darkness, never will I raise my
" sword in battle till I behold all my enemies in
" dismay and in shame. O tribe of Aamir, O clan
" of Kelab, dread the light and shade of my sword;
" soon shall thy wives scream in terrors of captivity;
" soon shall they weep for their orphaned little ones.
" I am Antar, son of Shedad, and my star is high
" raised above the sublimity of the seven heavens!"

When Antar had finished his verses, his tears gushed out in incessant streams, and he wept bitterly, till he could no more, and he fainted; but when he recovered from his swoon, he cast his eyes towards King Zoheir's seat, and thus expressed himself:

" Weep abundantly, my eyes, in torrents of tears;
" aid me, relieve my woes with weeping! For oh!
" I have lost a prince that was my support—that
" was my full moon; but it is now set below the
" earth! I have lost the sea and the rain by my
" enemies, and him whose benevolence resembled
" the deluging clouds. I have lost a lion, but in no

" lion was there his power. I have lost the knight
" of war, the invincible hero; my heart is on fire.
" I have lost all resignation for a prince who taught
" the Arabs on the day of combat with his spear.
" O Cais, depend on me; for in my heart is a flame
" of fire that consumes it, and my forbearance I can
" no longer persist in. Rise with me; let us seek
" vengeance speedily, for death is sweeter to my
" heart than honey. Reproach me not for my wars
" —I love them: I will hear neither word nor re-
" buke. Night is my complexion, and the lions of
" war know me. The coat of mail is my strong
" tower, and my heart is hewn out of a rock. War-
" riors are reduced to contempt by me in the day of
" combat, as the Arabs can witness for me. Woe,
" woe to my heart, for what it has lost. Death,
" now Zoheir is no more, is my noblest aim. O
" race of Abs, haste ye to vengeance against the
" tribe of Aamir, and fear not death. Exert your-
" selves with me, for you have a slave that has felled
" into disgrace every knight of the plains and the
" mountains. How many tribes are there in whose
" blood I have dyed my sword in the day of battle!
" How many the heroes I have laid low! How
" many valleys has it tinged! How many lions have
" bowed to me! How many multitudes have I ex-
" tirpated! death can bear me witness. Khalid!
" soon will I leave him stretched on the face of the
" earth, and his women as childless mothers shall
" mourn him. To-morrow will I annihilate ye, tribe

" of Aamir, quick with the point of the spear, and " the edge of my polished sabre. I will capture " your women; I will leave no vestige of them; I " will plunder your cattle, your property, and your " camels. I am Antar, whose qualities are well " known; the destruction of warriors, undaunted at " death."

When Antar had finished his verses, he went to his own dwelling, where all his regrets were renewed. But Cais was resolved on immediate departure; and he set out with the tribes of Abs and Fazarah, and the Arabs of that land and country. Antar also wished to go and aid him; but Malik, the brother of Cais, came to him: O Aboolfawaris, said he, stay at home, and do not follow my brother this time, for he would ill-use you, and perhaps even reject you, and make you ashamed on account of that miserable Amarah, and his despicable brother. How so? said Antar. Malik upon this related to him about Harith, and told him all the news; how Hadifah had written to him requesting his assistance, and last night Rebia hinted that the expedition would not be offered to you, and it is he who has concerted this plan. Then he described to him Harith's intrepidity and prowess, and how the Arabs boasted of him, even above you, said Malik.

Antar was exceedingly annoyed at hearing this: Go you, however, and join your brother, and tell him that Antar thanks him, and begs his pardon for all he has done. May the praise of God be on the

man who assists him, and can serve him instead of me in this expedition; and if he can take his revenge on Khalid, son of Giafer, praise be to the only and Omnipotent God! but, if he does not subdue his foe, then will I go against him alone, and will do unto him and his, what shall be for ages recorded. Thus Malik taking leave of him, astonished at his magnanimity, said, O Aboolfawaris, were I not afraid of being a scandal among the Arabs, and of their reproaches, for refusing to seek vengeance for my father, I would not follow him on this occasion. At last he departed, and his tears streamed copiously.

The camps, and horsemen, and troops, all followed Cais: his army amounted in all to twenty-five thousand men, all bold horsemen. Every one of them thought that Antar only staid at home to have his fill of Ibla, whilst Amarah headed all the warriors, brandishing his spear in his left hand, quite delighted at the absence of Antar on this expedition. But Antar, as soon as Prince Malik quitted him, returned home; he took off his warlike weapons, and entering the tents, his tears burst from his eyes, and he was absorbed in an ocean of reflection; when lo! the wives of his uncles came to him, and congratulated him on his safety. He paid them great respect, and received them with honour and attention; and they thus addressed him:

"Had we known of your arrival in the night, "we would have hasted to you on the crowns of "our heads. We would have given you the most

" honourable reception. O you illustrious one! the " life of our existence!"

Ibla and her mother were among the women; so Antar was much pleased, and his heart was filled with joy at seeing his beloved. He inquired about her health, &c.—to which she replied, Nothing has happened but what you have heard respecting King Zoheir and his son Shas—every one is acquainted with that. But we have been expecting your arrival, and that you would take vengeance on them; but we see all the men are gone, and you remain at home. Daughter of my uncle, said Antar, the party have obtained one who will seek their retaliation without me: they rejected me; I wished to accompany them, but they refused me. He told her what Prince Malik had imparted to him, at which the women were greatly surprised, saying Ay! that is the foul plan of the rogue Amarah and his iniquitous brother, for King Cais never did any thing but by the advice of Rebia. Well, cousin, said Ibla to Antar, pray where is my share of all this spoil? or am I no longer an object of value or consideration with you? By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, my share has been five hundred he and she camels, of the camels of Sewda, and the mountain of Volcano, and they are all blue-eyed, with black hair and bodies. So tell your black slaves to drive them out to-morrow morning, and mix them with the Asafeer camels, and excuse the trifle, for I was on Asyed's business. Then he told her all that had occurred

on the excursion, and the horrors he had endured, thus expressing himself:

"O Ibla, I have a heart steady in its love for "thee; and ever anxious in its passion. O Ibla, "pity me for my love.. I am thy captive-victim, "and my tears are like the stormy ocean. O Ibla, "thou hast vanquished my heart with a form, whose "beauties even flash before the brilliant sun. O "Ibla, thy face resembles in its lustre the dawn, "and thy tresses the darkness of night, the com-"plexion of thy adorer. O Ibla, not in all the "songstresses together are thy charms:. no, by "God, thy beauty is far superior. O Ibla, I am "indeed overwhelmed with love; all the world must "pity—compassionate me. O Ibla, thy cheek re-"sembles the crimson rose, and the pionies of the "gardens are like it. O Ibla, in thy bosom are the "pomegranates I desire, were even the swords armed "with lightning to flash from it. O Ibla, among "the Houris there is not a face like thine; and "amongst mankind there is no lover like me. O "Ibla, grant but a meeting to me, whose whole "soul pants for thee. O Ibla, were even death to "visit me, nought shall daunt me, for I am true "and firm; for all I demand of God is a sight of "thee at the dawn, and mid-day, and whenever "shines the sun!"

END OF VOL. III.

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ANTAR.

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ANTAR,

A BEDOUEEN ROMANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC,

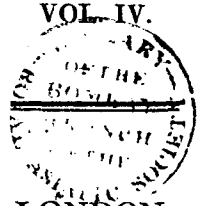
BY

TERRICK HAMILTON, ESQ.

ORIENTAL SECRETARY TO THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

PART THE FIRST.

VOL. IV.



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1820.

LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

ANTAR.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

But King Cais and the tribes of Abs and Fazarah and their party, amounting to twenty-five thousand men, armed, and well accoutred, continued their march, eager for battle, against the tribe of Aamir. At their head was Hadifah with a thousand horsemen, as the advance of the tribe of Fazarah.

They had marched about half-way, when a dust arose, beneath which were discovered a hundred horsemen, at whose head was the Brandisher of Spears, and at his side Harith son of Zalim. The cause of this was as follows: when Harith sent back Hadifah's messenger, engaging to assist him against the tribe of Aamir, he immediately marched to join Khalid, who joyfully received him, and conferred rich honorary robes on him and his party; he also presented him his steed Caasa, which had belonged to King Zoheir, and bestowed on

him his scimitar Zeenoor; it being his intent to pay every possible attention to Harith. And as he inspected the Arabs that were assembled at the general call to arms, he observed the Brandisher of Spears had mounted at their head with one hundred horsemen; he himself also followed with Harith. This party formed the advance of the army, and continued their march till they met Hadifah.

As soon as they met, their shouts arose: Come on, my cousins, exclaimed Hadifah, this is but an insignificant band, they do not exceed a hundred men; so plunder them with the sharp-edged scimitar. At Hadifah's call Harith came forth into the plain. Eh, son of an accursed mother, cried Hadifah, is this thy conduct towards us? Dost deny thy connection with us, and has thy soul thus acquiesced in perfidy in the plain and the desert? Ay, replied Harith laughing, for I am celebrated for my treachery, it is one of my natural habits; wise indeed were you to suppose I should assist you and a tribe that had admitted their slave among their chiefs, and made their herdsmen their champions: never will I condescend to sit with the tribe of Abs till I have slain their slave Antar, and have put numbers of them to death. But if you wish to secure yourself, away home; no more of your impertinence; engage not this army, or you and the tribe of Fazarah will be cut off, root and branch. Hadifah was confounded; perceiving that

he had fallen into a predicament out of which he could not escape but by fighting, he called out to his thousand; and men engaged men and heroes heroes. Blood flowed and streamed, whilst Harith and the Brandisher of Spears pierced through the horsemen of Fazarah, and made their advantages turn to their loss; for the hundred Aamirites withstood the thousand of Fazarah, and the spear thrust continued to clash on either side, and the dust to conglomerate, and the blood to gush from the wounds, till the armies came up and joined them. At that moment shouts were raised on all quarters; all were blinded to their dangers; every one that arrived, and saw the engagement, laboured and exerted his powers, and fought till the scene exceeded all calculation, and the carnage and terror were dreadful. King Cais and the Absian heroes arrived, and the battle raged among them with foot and leg. The sea of death waved and rolled its stormy surge. The complexions and constitutions of all were convulsed. Shame fell upon the coward, and the brave were painted with crimson gore. Lords became slaves, and the desert and rocks were agitated. Harith performed on that day exploits that confounded the sight; his chief object being to assault the tribe of Abs. Before evening, the Absians and the tribe of Fazarah being evidently worsted, the two armies separated on the advance of darkness. King Cais halted; and he now repented of having listened to the advice of

the wretch Rebia, and that he had followed his opinions, all of which were perfidious, and had rejected Antar, son of Shedad. Cousins, said Cais, in a general consultation, we have indeed taken rash counsel, and we have mangled our reputation amongst the high and low; never could I have imagined that this dog would have ventured against us in arms: I was mistaken in this tyrant. O King, said Rebia, I was indeed aware of his iniquity, and his malice, and his perfidy, and his treachery, but now it is all over; we are come hither to seek retaliation, and we have no other resource but to draw out the troops into the field of battle, and expose ourselves to the barbs of the spears, otherwise the Arabs of Hijaz will despise us. Moreover send to your relation, King Numan, that he may aid us with an army, or if you please, send for our cousin, the reliever of our sorrows and our griefs, Antar, son of Shedad; he will come and remove this difficulty from us, and will slay Harith in the battle and the contest. Who, my brother, said Amarah, is that black wittol, Antar? what achievement is there this army cannot effect, amongst which the first acknowledge, and the last assert, there is none like the terrible Amarah in the time of difficulty. Silence, O Amarah! said Asyed, no more of your nonsense, this is all your plan and your brother's plan; but by the faith of an Arab, had we known that our champion Antar was not of our party, not one of us would have followed you.

My advice is, that you send after him, and apologize to him, and make your whole dependence on him, or the Aamirites will invade your lands: should Antar acquiesce, it will be out of pure generosity and benevolence, and if he refuses to attend, he will be excusable. But as to your proposal of requesting assistance of Numan, before a messenger could reach him, or his armies come to your aid, your flesh will be in the maws of the eagles: for the proverb says, whilst the medicine is coming from Irak, the viper-bitten dies. By the faith of an Arab, there is no one but Antar. Nazih seconded Asyed in this proposition, as did all Antar's friends.

As soon as the King heard his uncle's opinion thus declared, he was convinced of its propriety, and at the instant he wrote a letter to Antar, in which he said: To him, whom we acknowledge as our cousin and the remover of our sorrows—the inextinguishable hot-coal of the tribe of Abs, and its ever-burning flame: know, O my cousin, that enemies have calumniated you to me (they are those to whom iniquity is natural), and you also know, my cousin, all the kind love I bear towards you; entertain not, therefore, any malice against us. O generous knight! what I request of you is, that you hasten your journey hither, in order to take retaliation for King Zoheir: let there be no other answer, O Aboolfawaris, but the applying of your foot to the stirrup; delay not, for death and de-

struction are descending upon us. He folded the letter, and gave it to a messenger, ordering him to be very expeditious.

King Cais laid himself down, and meditated on these deeds of fate. The two armies also reposed, keeping the watch till morning dawned. Harith, son of Zalim, started forth into the scene of battle, and galloping and charging to and fro, he cried out, come forth, ye Absians, knight to knight, or a hundred to one—or a thousand against one; and if you think it scanty justice, assail me all of ye at once, that I may tear out your lives by the sword-blow and the spear-thrust. Art thou not ashamed, cried Hadifah, at what thou hast said, and at drawing thy sword in the face of thy tribe? Eh, O Hadifah, said Harith, I acknowledge no such calculation—no parentage; but if thou wouldst escape death, hie thee away, take the tribe with thee, and go home to thy family: thwart me not, or thou diest, otherwise come on to the contest of swords. Do not imagine that I will respect thee on account of the connexion that exists between us. How is it that thou art fighting with those who have clothed thee in shame, and hast rejected the aid of those who came to seek retaliation for thee? Eh, O Harith, replied Hadifah, and where is that black slave? It was on your account we repulsed him: but he will soon join us here; for when we saw you allied to our foes, King Cais sent a messenger for Antar: he will assuredly come and disperse these armies.

Harith, on hearing this, rushed at him, and they began the contest. Fatigue soon fell on the arms of Hadifah; he was exhausted, and disgrace quickly succeeded his glory. Harith, being aware of his situation, assailed him, and pierced him with his spear through the thigh into the horse's side. Hadifah fell to the ground, and Harith standing over him on horseback, exclaimed, Rise, thou son of a coward! were there not a kindred between us, I would strike off thy neck with this sword. Haml, observing his brother's condition, urged on his horse till he came up to Harith. O son of Zalim, said he, have we deserved this of thee? Not so prolix, replied Harith. I forbad him the combat, but he would not desist: dismount, and take him with thee—depart to thy tribe; but if thou hast any wish for another contest, come on to the fight. Haml dismounted, and carried away his brother on his horse's back, seeking the tribe of the generous Absians; whilst Harith continued to gallop and charge, exclaiming, O tribe of Abs, I will not permit any but myself to punish you, that I may appease my whole heart among you; for you are my relations, and I have a right to seize your horses and your armour. Upon this, the Absians went out against him, horseman after horseman; but he robbed them of their lives, and carried off their horses and their arms; till night coming on and day disappearing, the armies retired to their tents, and the heroes laid themselves down to sleep, after they

had stationed the patroles. But as soon as it was light, the armies being mounted and the troops drawn up, Harith appeared between the two ranks, galloping, and charging, and prancing over the four corners of the plain, and admiring himself in the field of battle, he thus burst forth: "Let me hear "the fall of the sharp-edged scimitars, and the "whizzing of the spears through the body. Let "me drink of the blood of horsemen in the course, "between the flash of the sword and the dark shadow "of the spear. Talk no more of the dwellings of "Mey, or the land of Hind, or the tents of Seaad; "for there is no glory for youth in cups of wine, "circling under the shade of the vine, and in the "valley. Glory is only in the battle—dust in the "day of contest, or the blow through the heart. "Consider no one as a friend among men—look on "man as thine enemy. Smite every one with the "sword, and requite faith with outrage and injury. "As to the action thou deemest virtuous, rush "eagerly to its reverse by iniquity. O tribe of Abs, "how can ye escape by flight this day on your "generous steeds? My scimitar is firmly grasped "in my hand, and death dwells upon the double "edge of my spear. Come forth or retreat, you "will find me a knight that will never flinch in the "day of action."

On hearing this, pride and indignation raged in the heads of the Absians, for they were men bound on retaliation. Instantly stood forth Nazih on his

high-bred steed, famed in the day of battle: he attacked Harith, and rushing upon him without saying a word, he startled him by his impetuosity. They commenced the assault, and the combat, and the contest; their rage and passion increased—they laboured in the blow and the thrust, in advancing and retreating, till, being exhausted by repeated charges, they both stood still, gazing each at his antagonist. But as soon as they were rested, they vaulted again on their horses with renovated spirits, and recommenced the wrestle and the struggle. At last Harith charged down upon Nazih, and wearied and exhausted him. Asyed was alarmed for his son; when, lo! a knight, black as a mass of rock, came forth from the hostile ranks of the tribe of Aamir: he was strong-limbed, broad-shouldered, soiled with dust, scantily armed, and ill supplied with weapons: he had an instrument of war that could repel no blow, that could ward off no disaster: his spear was spliced together with reeds; his saddle was of wood, and his stirrup of palmyra rope: under him was a meagre, foundered horse; but he himself was like a devouring lion. When the horsemen beheld him they thought he was Khalid's slave; but as soon as that knight came close to Harith, Resign thy foe, he cried, thou son of a coward; and, he added, dost thou not know that these tribes that are assembled against the tribe of Abs, are come to seek property and plunder? and I among the rest have passed the valleys and the

mountains, and am come in quest of some booty, that I may return to my home and my family: but thou alone hast occupied the field of battle, and hast left every one besides thyself in starvation and penury. Now retire, and leave the fight, otherwise, by him who rooted firm the towering sides of the mountains, and has power over life and death, I will pierce thee with this broken spear: content thyself on the tribe of Abs with an easier prey, and begone!

Harith, on hearing these contemptuous expressions from this Bedoween, assailed him and thrust at him; but this Bedoween stooped and avoided the blow, and struck him with his spear on his back: it startled him, but the Bedoween's spear dropped down, shivered in four. Harith escaped the Bedoween, who dismounted, and began splicing it with some pieces of cord, and picked up the fragments from the plain. The Arabs were in great astonishment at the conduct of this rustic, and thought him mad. But the danger was removed from Nazih, for Harith had nearly killed him. Now when Nazih observed the Bedoween, and that he was tying up his spear, his generous spirit was roused; he galloped up to him, and said, Think no more, young man, of mending your spear, but take this, and return again to your antagonist; overthrow him, or he will turn against you in his malice. Take also this horse, for he will assist you in the charge; for had you a steed that was accustomed

to the plain of battle, you would soon destroy this demon; and you may then accomplish every wish with respect to the tribe of Abs and Adnan. Upon this, the Bedoween received the spear from Nazih; he mounted the offered horse, and quite pleased, O my lord, he cried, take charge of this my horse, for it is of a high breed, till this difficulty is removed from me. Thus saying, he returned to Harith, and rushed upon him, and flinging up the spear into the air with his hand, he caught it as it fell rolling round, and pierced Harith with the butt end of it on the chest: it hurled him to the ground, and his bones were bruised. Well, my lord, said he again to Nazih, take this horse on which he rode, and I will carry off his armour and spoils. Nazih took it, and charged upon it over the plain. When King Cais marked that horse beneath Harith, he was melted like lead; but now, seeing him mounted by his cousin, his concern and grief subsided. Let one of ye go to this Bedoween, said he to his attendants, and promise him wealth on my part; induce him to drive Harith towards us, before his comrades attack and rescue him out of our hands, or he will purchase his life from this poor fellow; and while King Cais was thus conversing, the Bedoween pointed to the tribe of Aamir, and cried out, O Mooferridj! O Mooferridj! and there issued forth a horseman in the same plight as himself. Dismount for this vile wretch, he cried, and bind fast his shoulders, for I cannot trouble such a fine

Chief as this, who gave me his arms, to whom I am also obliged for this horse. I have no doubt in my mind that he must be a king's son, and I wish this day to equal him in my gains, and to divide between him and me the horse and arms. I know he does not want it; but the chase is always an object, and the heart and soul are ever interested in it. Thus saying, he turned towards the tribe of Aamir, and defied them to the combat. When Khalid saw what this vagrant Arab had done to Harith, and heard him cry out to his comrade, who quitted the Aamir ranks,—By the faith of an Arab, he exclaimed, no doubt amongst these tribes that we have assembled there must be one who is our foe, or else some Absians have mingled with us. So he prohibited the troops from attacking, and sent for some one to bring him this Bedoween in disgrace and infamy. Jandah issued forth, roaring like an enraged lion, as he shouted, What art thou, foul Arab? and he rushed at him; but the Bedoween charged upon him, and they engaged till the scene of action appeared too confined; they clung to each other on their horses' backs; they grappled and struggled till their steeds were exhausted; they wrestled and grasped till all power and strength were extinct. But the vagrant Arab was the most forceful and the stoutest; he gave his adversary the grasp of a lion, and threw him on his feet by his superior might; he tore off his sword from round his neck, and endeavoured to drive him away with him; but as

Jandah resisted, he smote him with his sword, and made a gash on his shoulder, crying out with a loud voice, Hither, O Mosayid! O Mosayid! and there started forth a horseman from the same spot as the former. The Bedoween delivered Jandah over to him, and ordered him to take charge of him, saying, Let us see by the end of the day how many more of these filthy fellows will fall into our hands, and then we will consult about our further pleasures and wants. When the two tribes saw these deeds, they began to form various conjectures. As to King Cais, By the faith of an Arab, he cried, assistance is come to us, whence we know not: for Jandah is the very fellow that smote my father's head, and we are revenged for the iniquity of Harith, son of Zalim; we have only now to gain over to us the heart of this vagrant, and promise him whatever he wants: this Bedoween cannot be Antar; but like him there is no one human being, for he came forth into the plain naked, and has laid low knights such as these. O king, said Shedad, how oft you degrade the merit of my son, and raise the value of others! Know, O king, if this Bedoween were my son, I should have recognised him from any other horseman; from me he could not have been disguised. But I am certain of it, O Shedad, said Oorwah; I did recognise him from every other horseman, and marked him as he attempted to outstrip the horse. This is madness, said King Cais; as to Antar, we only sent to him last night, so how could a messen-

ger reach him? and between us there are eight days; we must suppose he followed us the very day of our departure. O king, said Shedad, had he followed us, it would not have been surprising; but as to his uniting with the tribe of Aamir, he must have heard that you boasted of Harith as being superior to him, and that you had bespoken his aid: he must have fought with your foes thinking Harith was on your side, with the wish to destroy him, and do with him just as he has done, and to show you his power: for my son is patient and forbearing—resentment has no place in him, and never will he allow an Arab to triumph at your expense. Just then advanced Nazih and Antar, and Harith and Jandah, with Shiboob and Jareer, dragging them along. The cause of Antar's arrival was this: as soon as he went to the tents, and, his meeting with Ibla being accomplished, he felt delighted at seeing her; but when the women had quitted him, he said to Shiboob, O my brother, I wish to follow the Absians, and see what Harith is doing: I will issue out against him and take him prisoner; and I will show Hadifah and Rebia the evil effects of such a plan. And in what form, said Shiboob, do you wish to go? In the disguise of a miserable slave, said he: I, you, and Jareer; and we will just sling spears over us. Upon this they mounted some broken-down horses, and rode on till they came within two days of the armies, and mixed among the tribe of Aamir, thinking Harith

was with the Absians; but when he saw what he had done, and observed how he fought, he knew him, and went forth against him and did as he did; but as soon as he had taken Jandah prisoner, he raised up his vizor, and Nazih recognised him: he kissed him in excess of joy, saying, O Aboolfawaris, verily thou hast done the deed of the most generous of men, and thou hast well kindled the flame of war and battle. By the faith of an Arab, had I or my father known that thou wert to have staid at home, we would not have followed Cais into this difficulty, but we would have left him, confiding in the opinions of Hadifah and Rebia. My lord, said Antar, it does not become a slave to reproach his master: this Jandah is he who murdered my lord, king Zoheir: he is the accomplice of Khalid, son of Giafer, and here his villany is rewarded. But, by the faith of an Arab, the deliverance of King Zoheir's horse and sword is dearer to me than my conquest over these horsemen, for by them Khalid deceived us, as you know, in the defile. I must requite that Khalid, and must abandon his land as a desert. But now return with me to our party: and as they went on, Antar thus recited:—"God has ennobled the "son of Shedad, and what his sword and the thrust "with his spear have effected against the enemy: "our property was plundered from us in fear, and "our friends could not repose in their alarms. But "I grasped the chiefs of the Aamirites by mid-day, "and I shall pass an evening in joy, like a quaffer

"of wine. I am a warrior that glories in his She-
"dadian birth, whilst the fire of battle blazes on
"the plain."

Cais heard Antar's verses, and recognising him, he hastened to meet him. I am now indeed convinced, O Aboolfawaris, he said, and making his apologies, he added, Think not that after the death of my father and my brother I have had sufficient presence of mind for the guidance of my conduct; indeed whoever volunteered his advice, I accepted it, and communed with his heart. Antar accepted this apology, and delivered over to him the murderer of his father. Eh, said Cais to Jandah, with this sword thou didst murder my father? Ay! said he. And with it, pursued Cais, will I strike off thy head: and as he spoke, he drew it forth from its scabbard, and as he waved it in his hand, flashes of light shot from its blade, and with it he smote Jandah, and severed his head from his body. This being done, they returned to the tents, and darkness soon coming on, the hostile tribe passed a night of despair; whilst Khalid, meditating on what had passed, out of precaution for his own person, directed his own countrymen to watch the tribe of Marah; Do not take any notice till day dawns, and then we shall see what the Absians will do with their chief, Harith.

But as to the illustrious Absians, their spirits revived at the arrival of their champion, Antar, and at the amelioration of their affairs after such agitation. King Cais assembled his chiefs and con-

sulted with them about Harith; the first who spoke about releasing him was Rebia, for he wished to reserve this calamity against Antar. My opinion is, O King, that you set him at liberty. And mine, said Shedad, that you strike off his head, and yours too, Rebia, on account of what we have suffered from his atrocities, you dotard! Every one that spoke was of this opinion. At last said Asyed, O my cousins, send for the man, and let us hear what he has to say, and if there is in him any room for favour, let him be pardoned; but if we find him resolute in his perverseness, put him to death. Every one approving of this advice, they produced Harith in chains.

Well! thou son of an accursed mother, cried Antar rising up, sword in hand, what induced thee to hostilities against thy tribe and to aid their foes? Nought induced me to such a deed but thou, replied Harith. By the faith of an Arab, truth is now the best course, O hero; my reason for this is, that I have long stationed spies and scouts over thee, till I heard of the death of King Zoheir, and that thy tribe was proceeding to avenge itself: so I imagined thou must be of the party, and accordingly I have done this deed: I said, I would also have retaliation, but thou hast vanquished me, and shame is heaped on shame. But hast thou not heard of my exploits? said Antar. Yes, said he; but my ambition glossed over my ignorance, and I could not ever suppose that fortune would be

tray me, and that there was any one on the earth to oppose me. But now I am become more modest. I have learned that fortune can produce every miracle. I have fallen into your power. I acknowledge my crime. Annihilation is what I deserve. Thou hast now only to put me to death, or pardon me that I may be thy slave for ever. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, if I thought that in thee there was room for grace, thou shouldst be pardoned: but I have heard of thee, that thou art a man of perfidy; an impostor, neither regarding protections, nor heeding hospitality, but one that breaks his faith and his oaths. Thou art right, O Aboolfawaris, said Harith, this was my disposition, but this day I have not the heart to harm either one on horseback, or one on foot. Well, said Antar to Cais, it will be as well to release him, and let him return home, for I am in a merry mood after my conquest. O Champion of the Absians, said Harith, do not delay, that I may on thy account put to the rout the armies of the tribe of Aamir, and white-wash my face among these tribes; then will I return home, and be thankful to thee. May God curse him who will not extirpate them with the sword, and that will not cut them off old and young! said Antar. I truly believe, my cousin, said Rebia, that you are able to do so; but if you are not satisfied with the oath of Harith, I will be his surety. So Rebia took Harith away with him to the division of the race of Zeead; and when he was alone with

him, he asked him what he really felt in his heart with respect to Antar. O Rebia, said he, I must positively contrive his death, and his destruction. Yes, said Rebia, but at another time; for now we are in want of both him and you: it is now advisable that you remain firm to your promise—there will be time enough. Thus they staid together, till, the day dawning, the men started up, and the warriors prepared: and lo! shouts burst forth from the tribe of Aamir; and their hordes waved like the sea over the desert, brandishing their swords: the dust arose on high and spread far and wide. The reason of this was, that Khalid had a spy among the tribe of Abs, whom he had sent over night to observe what was done to Harith. Early in the morning he returned, and told him it was Antar who had taken the horsemen prisoners, and that Harith had amicably settled his affairs with his tribe; and he has promised, added the spy, to destroy our armies. This is just his nature, said Khalid, for he cannot adhere long to his friends, or ever be sincere with his allies. But it would be expedient for us to begin with them, before they begin with us. Thus saying, he ordered his people to surround the tribe of Marah, and ply the sword among them: and they did so. As soon as Harith heard the shouts of his companions, he cried out, O, by the Arabs, the tribe of Marah is destroyed. Alas! we have not succeeded: and he made the attack,—he, and Rebia, and his brother, followed

by a thousand Fazarah horsemen, and some others from the tribe of Abs, headed by King Cais. The Absians assaulted the left of the Aamirites, and Antar led them on. Heroes were strewed on the plain: the multitudes were hustled together: coats of mail sparkled: swords cut in twain: the thousands rushed to the fight: Indian scimitars were shivered; and the Semhirian spears were shattered and split: calamities fell heavy on the tribe of Aamir. Noble pride and spirit animated the Absians. Antar performed deeds no Knight of Ignorance ever executed; for his thrusts anticipated the breath, and his assaults were incomprehensible—his shout was, Retaliation for King Zoheir and Shas! and he slew every hero he trampled down. Thus they continued till evening came on, when they separated. Harith had encountered the Brandisher of Spears, and passed the rest of the day in fighting and dealing spear-thrusts that would have turned children grey; and at the close of the day both were wounded and nearly dead. But when the two armies separated, Khalid, perceiving that his troops were discomfited, and that their numbers were greatly diminished, assembled the chieftains, and set out on his march home; whilst the Absians retired exulting at the victory and conquest they had gained; and there was not one but extolled Antar; and when they heard of Khalid's departure, Antar wished to follow them, but Cais refused, on account of the great fatigue and distresses they had already

endured. They laid down to rest in the tents, till God dawned with the day. Well, said Antar to King Cais, it will be but proper to give this booty to the tribes of Fazarah and Ghiftan, and that we reward them well and abundantly, and send them contented back to their homes and country. But let us surprise the land of Aamir; let none but ourselves assail them; let us do our own business ourselves. Cais approved of this plan, and he distributed the arms and the armour, saying to Hadifah, O my cousin, we have now no occasion to trouble you, for you have been wounded in our service, and he that wounded you is your nearest relation. Rebia has arranged Harith's affair with us, and the man will march home in company with you. It would be as well that you should not reproach him, for many of his men have been slain in this attack. Thus he sent them away, and there only remained with the Absians a thousand of the tribe of Ghiftan, with their chief, Jamrah, son of Sabic; for he was nearly allied to King Zoheir, and he swore he would not return home till he had taken retaliation for King Zoheir.

The next day, King Cais marched with his troops, amounting, exclusive of the Ghiftanians, to five thousand horsemen. The chief Antar headed the army; and with him was Asyed, and Oorwah, and Nazih; and thus he elegized King Zoheir:—

"Behold! we have opposed the edges of the "scimitars and the barbs of the spears on the swift-

"footed coursers. To engage the foe we have "sufficient force, were they even like the tem- "pestuous ocean. There is no glory in numbers; but "the glory of warriors was the dispersion of these "armies. Ask the Absians of me, O Ibla, when "the hordes of Kelab came against me with the "tribes of Ghani and Aamir, rolling like the waves "of the sea under the cloud-shadowed sky, con- "vulsed by the furious tread of the horses' hoofs. "How they fled and the spears on their backs "pierced their kidnies between their entrails and "their hypocondres; had they stood firm, I would "have left behind, on the desert, their bones and "flesh for the rapacious eagles; how well my tribe "exerted itself without the aid of Zalim's son! "foul was his act, his word perfidious. He said "there was none on earth like him; but when he "encountered me, then shone forth the glory of "glories; he was to our foes an ally and assistant; "but he retreated from my sword, frustrated and "of no avail. I love the tribe of Abs, and when "blood flows, the friendship of a slave is sincere, "and his word is true and faithful. They ap- "proached, when they had sent me away, and "encountered the spears flashing with light: they "felled Zoheir, and the lacerating spears, and "lances, and scimitars clashed over him. He in "his power was the death of men; but he who was "the cause of death, has now visited the inhabitant "of the tombs. O woe, woe! that his foes have

" triumphed over him, the crown of the Absians
" and all the tribes! But I will not allow Khalid,
" now Zoheir is gone and murdered, a resting-place
" but in the bowels of the graves. How can I
" sleep by night, and not seek revenge? for he was
" my resource in every difficulty."

When Antar had finished his verses, his party thanked him for the excellence of his achievements; and they continued traversing the deserts, and in their hearts was a burning flame against Khalid. In the meantime, Khalid reached his own country, and there remained with him out of all his assembled host, only ten thousand horsemen (for every clan sought its home and departed). His own tribe advised him to send the women and families to the mountain-tops: thus having secured their wives and property, they prepared to meet their foes.

The next day arrived the Absians, and their armour glittered, as they surrounded the tribe of Aamir on all sides. But Khalid, seeing their scanty numbers, was delighted. O my cousins, he cried, rejoice, for they are only come with a small party. He attacked, and his warriors followed him, but he saw in the Absians blows that turned infants grey. The spears pierced through every mortal part of their bodies; the dust and clouds of sand increased till darkness came on and the two armies separated; but the Absians had greatly the advantage over the Aamirites; for Antar, knowing how they relied on him, did more than he had promised, and

performed deeds no one could surpass. Before evening, twelve hundred Aamirites were slain, but only seventy of the Absians. Antar retired, clothed in a scarlet robe of the blood of horsemen; eleven horses had been killed under him, for none but Abjer could serve him (now Abjer was at home, and Antar had come on a miserable hack). When King Cais saw Antar's resolution and intrepidity, he gloried in him, and from that hour he felt convinced that his kingdom would not last but by his assistance; so he went to meet him and thanked him, and he and his brothers treated him with every kindness. But the tribe of Aamir retired in the deepest consternation, and dispirited at the loss of their chiefs, and as they stated in their complaints to Khalid, what they had experienced from Antar's sword, O my cousins, said he, your excuses are indeed well-founded this time, for it was this black-slave that routed us with his attacks; and if I do not take a great part of the battle on myself, we shall be completely cut up; and with this intention he reposed till the day shone and the men sprung up for the contest and battle.

The ranks were scarcely drawn up, or the swords unsheathed, when lo! out started a knight from the tribe of Aamir, and advancing towards the Absians, O tribe of Adnan! O band of heroes! he exclaimed, I have come forth this day to the field to protect the women and families, and I will try myself in the scene of slaughter, and by the faith of

an Arab, I have not completed my twentieth year; never have I quitted the tents and dwellings of my tribe: come forth against me, any one whose kindred equals mine, for I am, by the faith of an Arab, of an illustrious tribe—renowned for their patience in the day of tumults. I am called Aamir, the son of Tofeil, and the Brandisher of Spears is my maternal uncle, and were he not wounded he would not acquiesce in this my wish. Then galloping and charging, he thus spoke:—

"Do not, O my mother, indulge in thy sorrows "for me: have patience on the day of my con- "test and my absence. Let me singly act in the "quest of glory with the edge of my well-propor- "tioned Indian scimitar. Let me be proclaimed "through the exalted mansions of renown for the "piercing barb of my supple spear. Who, when "in quest of glory, feels conscious that this sport is "of bitter flavour? Perhaps I may, with the edge "of my sword, extinguish the flame of the fiercely- "burning battle. I will show myself to the foe; "and I will rescue my tribe from the lions on their "high-mettled steeds; or I will meet my fate with "the mangling spear, for whose sting there is no "balm. I will abandon my mother to pour out her "sorrows in childless misery, and to shed her tears "of anguish."

He had scarcely finished his verses, when an Absian horseman galloped against him, and presented himself before him. This was a knight of

exceeding courage; firm and resolute in the combat: over him was a strong corselet and a cleaving sword; round his shoulder was slung a lacerating spear; beneath him was a swift courser: but Aamir permitted him neither to gallop nor to charge, before he pierced him between the paps, and forced his spear through his shoulders. He again repeated his challenge, and a second came forth, but he slew him instantly. O Absian tribe, by the faith of an Arab, he cried in his boasts and his vaunts, ye are the horsemen of the age, and the heroes of Adnan; but I am of little experience in battle. Come out against me, brave as ye are, ye heroes! despise not my youth—let me try myself with some of your knights, and your warriors. When the Absians heard this harangue, and saw what deeds Aamir had effected, they rushed upon him from all sides, and issued forth against him like sea-monsters, brandishing their spears and their swords. But a knight, beautiful in form, and short in speech, anticipated them all. He was perfect in every point, and was called Carwash, son of Hani, and cousin to King Cais. The horsemen, seeing him advance, halted, and retired in awe of him. Carwash assailed Aamir: they began the attack: they thrust with their spears till they were shivered, and smote with their swords till they were shattered; and their horses died under them. They continued in this perilous contest till mid-day, when the dust clearing away from them, lo! Aamir came forth with

Carwash, his prisoner, and driving him away like a camel. The horsemen checked themselves from rushing into the scene of action; but Antar was greatly exasperated, and his eyes were red as blood —he resolved on darting out against him, but Nazih anticipated him, and engaged Aamir till the evening, when each quitted his antagonist and described what he had experienced that day. As Aamir retired to his party, his cousins met him and congratulated him on his safety. As to Khalid, he was in ecstasies of joy—it was impossible to be more so. But the tribe of Abs was impatient for the morrow; and as soon as the obscurity of night departed and the day shone bright, the warriors sprung forward for the fight and the contest, and Aamir, son of Tofeil, was foremost on the plain, and thus spoke:

"The mother of Aamir exerted her influence to
"prevent my mounting at the voice of the herald.
"She would keep me back, fearful of death on the
"edge of the Indian blades. Do not be obstinate or
"perverse, O mother, death is ordained by fate, and
"it is near as well as at a distance. Let me plunge
"into the seas of deaths with the light and noble
"chargers. O, tribe of Abs, there is no refuge from
"my sword, or my spear, nor from death. There-
"fore either retreat or stand firm. You will ever
"find in me a knight that never flinches from the
"scene of battle."

Aamir, having concluded his verses, rushed to the combat and repeated the challenge. Soon came forth

Oorwah; but Antar dismissed him, and descended upon Aamir, saying, Come on, on to the field of battle! Eh! thou base-born! cried Aamir, recognizing him, I will not fight with one whose birth is so mean and vile among the Arabs. I say this not out of fear of thee, nor of death. But my mother saw me in a dream, and went to a soothsayer to whom she imparted the secret; and he said to her, Let not your son contend with a black slave. Eh, thou bastard! cried Antar, and shall I, on account of thy mother's visions, permit thee to destroy the horsemen of the tribes of Abs and Adnan in the field of battle? Thus saying, he shouted at Aamir and rushed upon him, and Aamir was compelled to meet him. A dreadful combat ensued between them—it was a contest that would melt even the hardest rocks, and stupefy the eyeballs and terrify the bravest warriors. They continued in this state till the warriors were astounded; but when Antar perceived his intrepidity he closed upon him, and hemming him in so close that stirrup grated stirrup, he grasped the rings of his coat of mail and breastplate and held him up in his hand, like a sparrow in the talons of a ferocious hawk, and threw him over to Shiboob, who bound fast his shoulders and tied down his arms and sides, and as he was going to drive him away towards the Absians, lo! Aamir's mother rushed forth, crying out, and her slaves were leading along Carwash, son of Hani: O Aboolfawaris, she exclaimed, force not my son to taste of the meat of captivity;

here is Carwash at your disposal, only release my son, Aamir, as his ransom. Antar hailed Shiboob, and ordered him to let Aamir go; and having thus rescued Carwash, he retired from the scene of multitudes. Now came on the night of obscurity, and let down its canopy over the two horizons. The two armies reposed till the morning dawned, when mounted the tribe of Abs and the tribe of Aamir; and the troops being drawn up in array, lo! Khalid issued forth between the hostile ranks on a white and black charger indefatigable and unflinching; he was completely enclosed in armour, and he cried out in a loud voice, Eh, O sons of King Zoheir, how long must last this contest, this destruction of warriors, this dishonour of wives and women? This is a circumstance no high-born hero can endure. I am he who slew your father Zoheir and your brother Shas. I will not suffer any one to aid me in this affair; here am I in person, come forth against me one by one, but let no one as the first come forth but your King Cais; for he has taken the seat of his father, and I am the King of the tribe of Aamir and the chief of the Hordes and the Clans; whoever shall slay his antagonist, let him succeed in his projects and complete his hopes. King Cais heard this, and the affliction fell heavy on him; and thus too were his brothers, and there was not one but welcomed death. Antar marked their situation; he roared and bellowed: What is the matter, O King? he cried; Cannot one of ye command himself to go out against him?

Well, let me bring him to you a prisoner. I will lay him down before you abject and debased. O my cousin, said King Cais, by thy life, return to thy post and let me appease my heart with Khalid, and I will not let the Arabs look on me as one incapable and inefficient; so he moved forward on the back of Caasa, and rushed against Khalid. Upon this, Antar retired, but resolved in his own mind that if he should see King Cais overpowered by Khalid, he would make an attack and assist him. Cais encountered Khalid, and between them was a contest and combat that seared the eyeballs. They continued till the honour of chivalry was rent and mangled, and they were charging and staggering till their spears were split in their hands; they threw them on the ground—they grasped their sparkling blades, as instruments more ready for the plunder of lives, and they continued this conflict till also their swords were shivered; they returned their fragments to their scabbards, and grasped each other on their horses' backs with all their might and main, and both fell to the ground, both firmly clinging to each other; there they wrestled and struggled till death and the worst of evils was at hand. It was then the two armies attacked, and the troops rushed forward. It was then horsemen shouted from every quarter. It was then they waved their spears and their scimitars. It was then rage and indignation violently seized Antar, and he advanced to see how it was with Cais; but Rebia, son of Ocail, met him, and the heart of

each was full of the day in the defile and the circumstances that befel them. The horsemen of the two tribes moved towards their respective kings, like fragments of clouds, and the combat and the battle raged fiercely among them. Arab necks were hewn off, and the dust rose up like clouds, and all around them was like the darkness of night. The brothers of King Cais made a furious assault and fought in the most desperate manner. Antar and Rebia, son of Ocail, were also engaged in a combat that transformed youth to age. Antar, indeed, alarmed lest death and extinction should fall upon Cais, burst on Rebia with the rush of a lion, and with a shout as if it were thunder when it crashes. Rebia was petrified with horror and aghast with affright, and in this state of consternation, Antar pierced him with his spear through the chest, and drove it out sparkling through his back, and instantly renewed his attack against the Aamirites like a savage lion; he felled down the horsemen; he cut through their comrades till he came up with the sons of King Zoheir and Khalid, who only considered them all as one individual. But Antar halted, and, extending wide his arm with his sword, he was about to slay Khalid, when lo! Rebia, son of Zeead, shouted out, Hold! O Aboolfawaris, for Malik, son of Zoheir, and my brother Amarah are fallen his prisoners, and if you put Khalid to death they will both be slaughtered, and ruin must be our doom. Thus was Antar most grievously distressed; he ordered Shiboob to bind him fast, and

Khalid felt assured of death. But when Cais saw this he sprung on his feet, and Antar waited for him; alarmed at his situation, he encouraged him, and sent Shiboob for a horse and mounted him. Conduct my Lord from the terrors of the fight, said Antar to Shiboob, that I may disperse these horsemen, and he assaulted the army and forced them to a disgraceful retreat, overthrowing warriors and destroying the brave, till the evening closed in. The Aamirites were completely routed. The Absians returned from the pursuit without any loss, not even to the value of a halter; and when they alighted to rest, they hastened to King Cais and congratulated him on his safety. 'Rebia informed him of the captivity of Malik and his brother Amarah. O Rebia, said Cais, much afflicted, my brother and thy brother can never be liberated, but by the deliverance of this cuckold. Were it not so, I would strike off his head and would drink of his blood. Guard him till we to-morrow ransom our prisoners by him, and we must wait some future event for him. My lord, said Antar, distress not yourself about the deliverance of our prisoners; if he escapes from me this day, he will not escape to-morrow; and had I not been occupied with the death of that Rebia, son of Ocail, I would soon have made him drink of the cup of annihilation before this accident had happened. This night let the tribe of Aamir repose with their wives and families on the summits of the mountains, but to-morrow we will proceed on foot against them with sword and

buckler, and we will scatter them about like leaves. Cais was much pleased, and his sorrows were relieved. They slept till dawn, when they sent for Khalid, and informed him of their intentions, and demanded of him his ransom, to which he assented with oaths, in which the Arabs have the firmest reliance. Cais accordingly set him at liberty, and he departed for his tribe. But when he was about to deliver Malik and Amarah, the tribe of Aamir would not obey him, saying, We must hang these two, and revenge ourselves on them. The Absians indeed have slain our chiefs, and they will not quit us till they have entirely destroyed us.—Cousins, replied Khalid, in dismay, I have sworn to Cais by the severest oaths and the pillars, so what means this? Were we to be slaughtered like so many sheep, I cannot possibly perjure myself, and become a liar and a traitor; particularly whilst we are thus reduced and disgraced. We must exert all our strength in meeting the foe. I will assemble all who have blood and retaliation against them, and I will not desist till I have rooted out every trace of the tribe of Abs. Upon this, the hearts of the Aamirites being reconciled, he sent for Prince Malik and Amarah, and made them swear that their tribe should return home for the remainder of the year. Having given the required oath, they were sent down the mountain, mounted on noble horses, and very grateful for their security. But as soon as they reached their tribe, and explained what had

passed, May God curse the tribe of Aamir! said Cais, this is treachery and villany.—Khalid will decidedly, said Rebia, assemble against us his clans, and will write to every one that rides or walks; however, in a second rencontre, we will root out every trace of them. King Cais thought this plan the most expedient; so he departed for his family and home. But Antar's heart was not at rest in retreating from the tribe of Aamir; and as he described what had occurred to him and his tribe, he thus recited:

"Ah, O Ibla! my youth is wasted, and the "period of thy absence inflicts repeated tortures. "My love for thee is oppressive; it increases daily, "as age grows on youth. For thee I have passed "the revolutions of my fate, till my life fleets away, "and my patience is become my chastisement. I "have encountered the foe; I have protected the "tribe; but they despise me, and have no regard "for my existence. Ask of me, O Ibla! in the "day of adversity, the tribes of Aamir and Kelab. "How many knights I have left stretched out, "their hands deep died with gore! They moved "hither in my absence, and they brandished their "spears, glittering like the shooting stars. How "many lions have rushed at me, and in disgrace "have cast away their spears on the ground! They "cry out at me, and I answer them with the spear-"thrust, deciding before a reply. I have slain "two hundred free-born of them, and a thousand

" in the defiles and the sandhills. Ha! let Khalid " rejoice in the calamities of my tribe; but the day " of his extinction shall be the most tremendous of " all the periods of misfortune."

They continued traversing the deserts night and day, and Antar guarding them from the enemy, till they came near home; and when there only remained one night's march, on a sudden Antar was not to be heard of, and they could not trace him any where. King Cais was aghast and bewildered, as were also his brothers, and all Antar's friends; but his inveterate haters rejoiced in his absence, particularly Rebia and his despicable brother, and Malik, Ibla's father; and though Cais stopped the march of his people, and sent horsemen right and left till the evening, they returned disappointed and unsuccessful. By the faith of an Arab, said King Cais, I will not stir from hence till I know what has happened to our cousin.—This, said Amarah, would show but little wisdom and sagacity in you, that the Chiefs of Abs and Adnan should be kept waiting for a black slave, a worthless, mean fellow.—O Amarah! exclaimed King Cais, highly exasperated at such language, art thou not ashamed even to mention thy cousin in his absence? it was but the other day he rescued thee from captivity. By the faith of an Arab, were Antar here present, I would not screen thee from him.—O disgrace, disgrace at thy words; my cousin! cried Amarah.—Ay, he is thy cousin, said King

Cais, whether thou wilt or not; and were he not, not a head would be raised towards the tribe of Abs; of no esteem would they be among men.—It will be as well, said Rebia, that we wait for our cousin, till he comes. However, King Cais marched in the morning, yet greatly afflicted and distressed at the loss of Antar, the lion warrior; and when they reached the dwellings, they inquired about him, but no one could give any information of him. Every one entered his own abode, and joined his children and family. Malik, Ibla's father, having now heard from some of the women all that had passed between his daughter and Antar, when the tribe marched against the Aamirites, ran at her with his drawn sword, and roared to his wife, Thou foul wretch! wert thou not ashamed for thy child, that she should appear openly in the presence of Antar, and converse with him? Thou hast taught her to demand presents and goods of him, and it is thy wish to load me with infamy among men and women.—I had not done this, replied she, but that I saw you inclined towards him, and that you had bestowed her on him in marriage. But now, if your heart is estranged from him, I will never let him see her again.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HADIFAH and his brothers hearing of King Cais's return, took with them a party of the Fazarah tribe, and came to compliment him on his safety, and congratulate him on his victory and triumph. Cais made a splendid feast for them, to which he invited the chiefs of the Absians and his brothers, and informed them of the loss of Antar. Hadifah appeared greatly affected, and exhibited the reverse of what he felt. They ate meat and drank wine till mid-day, when the King, hearing some loud acclamations in the tents, asked what was the matter. Shiboob and his brother Antar are returned, was the general cry; when lo! Antar arrived. He saluted the Absians, and he was on horseback. King Cais inquired the cause of his absence. O King, he replied, I was on the service of one who deserved no duty at my hands; for he is of a villanous disposition, and of a foul origin.—To what dost thou allude by that? said Cais. Hear my tale, O King, said he, and you will acknowledge I am right. On the night that you missed me, I had launched out into the desert, fearful of the night-wanderers and the robbers on your account; and whilst I was thus employed, a figure appeared before me. I went forward, and lo! it was a va-

grant Arab on his journey. I hailed him; and to my inquiries, Warrior, said he, I am a poor, ill-used fellow. I am going to the tribe of Abs, to make a demand of Rebia.—I am, said I, O Arab, one of the slaves of Rebia, so tell me what he owes you.—Warrior, he replied, I am called Basharah, son of Mabid, and I have a daughter, who was demanded in marriage of me. I consented; and taking with me one hundred she-camels, I set out for the valley of Deecar, that I might purchase with their produce some clothes, with which to set off my daughter; but some plundering horse met me and waylaid me; they carried away my camels, but I escaped on this steed. Being certain the party were of the tribe of Kenanah, I took the nearest road, saying to myself, I will go to the tribe of Abs, to my friend Rebia. On this, I said to him, Rejoice, O Arab, for I am his deputy: lead on, and conduct me to your enemies, that I may realise your wishes. He proceeded, whilst I followed till the day dawned, when lo! we came upon a troop near the water of Career, and the land of Nefeer: there were forty horsemen; five and twenty of whom I slew, and the rest ran away. I restored to the man the horses, and the she-camels and he-camels, with which being well satisfied and grateful, he repaired to the family of Zeead. I returned, and have now erected for them a strong columned building; but I find them talking infamously of me, and abusing my mother for adultery: this is all my reward, and thus you may

distinguish the legitimate-born from bastards. How long, thou son of Zeead, added he, turning sharply on Amarah, must this insolence last? for by him who has clothed the night in darkness, if thou dost not cease talking foully of me, and mend thy manners, I will hack thy limbs with this sword. What! thou bastard, cried Amarah, jumping up and unsheathing his sword, such language to me! Darest thou thus impertinently insult me among the chiefs? At my pastures I have a thousand slaves such as thee; and he made at Antar sword in hand. But the others rose up and checked him; and Rebia called out, reproaching and abusing him: he ordered him to be silent, and taking the sword out of his hand, said, Is this a recompense for our cousin, who has exposed his life for us? But Antar moved silently away, and went home greatly ashamed on account of Cais, for he had vexed him, and disturbed the entertainment. When Antar reached his mother's tent, she hung upon him and wept from excess of joy and love.

Now King Cais had been greatly distressed at this interruption; but Rebia soothed his heart, saying, It is quite impossible that my brother and Antar can ever meet in the same place again; but I have in my heart something I should wish to do. Thus they continued over their cups of wine and conversing, and made Hadifah and Haml drink, and loaded them with all manner of favours. Thus it continued whilst the day withdrew its light, and

the night shaded them in its darkness till morning, when Hadifah and his brother returned home.

But Rebia and his brothers quitted the tents, and, together with their dependants, descended into the valley of Yamooriyah, also accompanied by their horsemen and warriors, and those who hated Antar, that they might seek the means of annoying him. As soon as this circumstance was made known to King Cais, he disregarded it, and cursing them, Wherever they go, cried he, may death overtake them! And thus he cast them from his heart, saying to the Arab chiefs that surrounded him, Ye know, my cousins, that King Zoheir admitted Antar to our birth and parentage, and called him cousin, and accepting him as such, he raised him to honour and legitimacy. Now, whenever Amarah and Antar meet, they quarrel and disturb the union of the tribe; and should they remain separate, it will be better than their living together. Antar every day associated with King Cais, and attached himself to him, and thus they continued many days and nights. But Antar, on his arrival, having heard what had passed between his uncle Malik and his wife, and how he had attempted to kill her, remained entirely with his mother. In the mean time, King Cais became very anxious for the termination of the year, on account of Khalid, son of Giafer, who he understood had thrown himself on Direed, son of Samah, chief of the tribes of Howazin, and Jeshm and Hamadan, and had induced him to pro-

mise his assistance with ten thousand horsemen against the tribe of Abs.

This Direed was four hundred and fifty years old, and by the Arabs he was called the Mill-stone of War. He was referred to on every difficult point, on account of his great age, and his orders were obeyed among the Arabs like King Numan's. So when King Cais heard this, he was in dismay: This, he cried, is indeed complete ruin! He then assembled the Absian chiefs, and consulted about what he should do. Comfort your mind and brighten your eye, exclaimed they all, for were Khalid to come against us with the armies of Chosroe, we will fight till we die in your presence. O King, said Antar, easy let it lie on thee, and on the sepulchre of King Zoheir! I will disperse the armies of our foes, and will not leave one of them alive. The words of Antar revived him, and feeling re-assured: O Aboolfawaris, said he, you indeed can speak and act!

From that day they made preparations for war, and searched for arms; but only finding a small quantity, Cais consigned the country to the care of Antar, and leaving his uncle in his place, he took a noble string of he and she camels, and resolved on selling them, in order to purchase with their produce some arms and weapons. He set out for Medina Yathreb, for that was the nearest place, and its chief was called Ajijah, son of Jellah, the Yathrabee; and he was the brother of Abdool-motallab on the mother's side; and between him

and King Cais there existed a friendship of long standing, from the time of his father King Zoheir; and when King Cais reached Medina Yathreb, Ajijah was much pleased, and received him very kindly. Cais related his adventures, and that he was come to purchase arms. Now Cais having heard that Ajijah had a coat of mail of the workmanship of David, and exquisitely riveted, whose like no one possessed; he addressed him, saying, O Chief, I have heard that you have a coat of mail made by David, which I am anxious to purchase, that in it I may go against my enemies, and I will give you its value instead. O Cais, said Ajijah, I would have given it you, but Khalid has already asked me for it, and praised me in his verses. What are the verses, said Cais, in which he praised you? Let me know them; and Ajijah thus repeated:

"When I demanded a favour from the race of "Yathreb, Ebe Amroo cried out, and Ajijah con- "sented. Remain under the protection of a Yath- "rabee, for if thou stayest there, a shadow will "even dread thy power. I saw a man, over the "brilliancy of whose countenance was a vizor, by "which the sun was hid or shone. I have a "station in glory, in honour, and on high, but his "mansion is above the two Pisces. If he brandishes "his sword on the day of horrors, thou mayest see "the rays of his sabre flashing with death; and were "his hand and the cloud impregnated with rain, to "exhibit their bounties, his beneficence would en- "dure, and the cloud desist. In his house every

"fugitive is safe, and with his donations he even "satisfies the unsatiable. Virtues were of old in "Jellah, and since him Ajijah has imitated him."

On hearing these verses, Cais was astonished at their import and allusion: By the faith of an Arab, said he, I cannot blame or reproach you. Cais remained with Ajijah till morning, and having purchased all the arms he wanted, Ajijah questioned him, saying, O Cais, have you purchased the arms? Yes, said he. Well then, said Ajijah, bid now for the coat of mail. Cais was pleased; but said, By the faith of an Arab, of all my trifling articles, I have now only remaining one hundred camels: so take them, whether it be much or little, and excuse me for the deficiency. On this, he sent for the coat of mail, and it was of great length in the skirts. Take it, O Cais, said he, let it be considered as a purchase made for a hundred she-camels, though, in fact, it is a present from me to you. So he took one of the she-camels out of the hundred, and restored the remainder to Cais, who was very grateful, and in three days, having procured every thing he wanted, he took leave of Ajijah, and setting out for his own country, he reached the valley of Yamouriyeh, whence he sent home his arms with his slaves, and proceeded unattended to Rebia, who, being told of his arrival, met him, and complimented him, receiving him hospitably, and making him welcome. In the course of conversation, Cais asked his advice about his attacking Khalid and the Aamirites. My cousin, said Rebia, we are all yours, and at your

disposal. But whither have you been travelling? I have been to Medina Yathreb to purchase some arms. And where, said Rebia, are your purchases? I have sent them home, said Cais, with the slaves. Rebia stared about, and at last espied his portmanteau, which was full. O my cousin, said he, what is in your portmanteau? Cais laughed. O my cousin, said he, there is in it what would surprise you indeed, were you to see it. Let me see it then, said Rebia. Cais alighted and took out the coat of mail of Ajijah, and opened it before Rebia, who was astonished. O Cais, said he, whence came you by this? This is, said he, the coat of mail of Ajijah, son of Jellah, the Yathrabee, and he has made me a present of it. O Cais, said he, if that man made you a present of any thing, it must be invaluable; and Rebia stood up and put on the coat of mail, and though he was very tall, it came down to his heels. He walked away with it and entered the tents; then rushing out with a drawn sword in his hand, he cried out to Cais, This is my coat of mail! it was stolen from me, and there are my marks on it, this very flaw in the sleeves; and if you do not tell me all about it, I will sue you for it, and he recited these verses:

"O Cais, my coat of mail I never sold, neither
"did I give it away; it was stolen from me by some
"of the Arab hordes: I am not one that speaks
"falsehoods—no; by the truth of Him who is con-
"cealed from sight! It happened by chance there
"was a flaw on it, and it will serve as a proof on

" all points. By God, were you not nearly related " to me, I would bring down death upon you, even " in the month of Rejib."

Cais was stupefied for a time: Son of Zeead, he said, what outrage is this? Dost wish to purloin my coat of mail by such a frivolous pretence? And thus he expressed himself:

" Wretch! thou wouldst purloin my coat of mail " by fraud, by foul accusations and falsehoods: the " coat of mail belonged to Ajijah, son of Jellah, the " Yathrabee. Talk not such nonsense; thou art " no more a child. By the truth of Him who spread " the wings of nocturnal obscurity, I will not give " it up, were even my father alive."

* Upon this, they disputed violently in words, and a serious quarrel ensued, and they abused each other most virulently. The Arabs assembled round them, but Cais was unable to contend with Rebia and his Arabs, for he was alone. So he calmed them with his words, whilst the family of Zeead laughed at him. Away, O Cais, said Amarah, to your family; we will restore it to you, but should it happen that we do not return it, send to us your champion Antar, son of Shedad; let him come here and rescue it from these horsemen.

Cais, being now aware they only sought to quarrel and provoke him, mounted his camel and returned home. He hastened to his wife, Rebia's daughter, and said to her, If I abandon my coat of mail to your father, all the Arabs will accuse me of imbecility over the deserts and the wastes, and will re-

* This quarrel is an historical fact.

duce me to infamy and disgrace. O my father, cried his daughter Jemanah (and she was the most beautiful of the daughters of Arabia; she could even compose poetry, so that she was quite a proverb), I will restore to you your coat of mail, for my grandfather Rebia is very fond of me. Do so, O Jemanah, said her father, do what you please.

Upon this she mounted her camel, and taking a slave with her, she went to the valley of Yamoor, where, as she entered the tent of her grandfather, he stood up to receive her, and saluting her, treated her with the greatest kindness, saying, What has brought thee hither, O Jemanah? I am come, replied she, on account of my father's coat of mail. Here I am; send me not back disappointed, for I am thy favourite. Yes, said Rebia, in his wily manner, when I have fought Khalid with it, I will return it to him. Jemanah, perceiving that he would persist in his obstinacy, thus addressed him:

"My father will not permit that his coat of mail
"should be purloined from him, and my grand-
"father consents to purloin the coat of mail from
"my father. My father's judgment is the judgment
"of a prudent and cautious man; but the conduct
"of my grandfather is the conduct of an oppressor
"and a tyrant. The son of Zoheir will not give up
"his coat of mail, neither will the son of Zeead yield
"to salutary counsel. O Cais, this coat of mail was
"left with thee, as an act of generosity, for the bat-
"tle that turns infants grey: so I fear that Antar,
"who plunges into the horse-dust, will not yield it."

As soon as Jemanah had finished she departed, and repaired to her father. May God be with thee, O my father! said she: if it be possible for thee to resign the coat of mail, give it up; for now that he has denied me, he will resign it to no one. And if thou dost dispute with him, he will dispute with thee; and if thou wilt fight with him, he will fight with thee: thus will the tranquillity of the tribe be dissolved. Very well, said Cais. But the news soon spread about the dwellings of the Absians, and it came at last to Antar, who was exceedingly indignant, and went to King Cais, to whom he said, How! hast thou been cajoled by thy enemies? and thou the king of the age! and canst thou submit to such disgrace and infamy? If thou art willing to have thy coat of mail rescued, I will soon redeem it for thee, ay, before to-morrow's dawn, were it even on the back of the driving clouds. I will slay that Rebia, and Amarah, and the whole race of Zeead. It was on this very account, said King Cais, I would not inform you of it. And he told him all that had passed with the family of Zeead, and how Amarah had said, Hie thee hence, and send us thy champion Antar, son of Shedad.

Without word or comment Antar retired home, and called out for Shiboob, who instantly appeared. O son of my mother! he cried, I wish thee to tell me how I must manage, for King Cais has been cajoled by Rebia, and my heart is in an agony at the words of Amarah, for he even said to Cais, Hie thee away; send us thy champion Antar, to rescue

thy coat of mail from hence. My advice is, said Shiboob, that we proceed to the valley of Yamoor, and that we hide ourselves near the tents of the Zeead family. No doubt some one of them will fall into our hands: we will take him prisoner, and we will not desist tormenting him, till we ransom him for the coat of mail of Ajijah.

That's just the thing, said Antar; and they waited till evening, when they set out for the valley of Yamoor, where, lo! they saw in front of them a fellow lying asleep, and before him stood a horse. Shiboob went up to him, and struck him with a stick over the back of his head. He instantly awoke, and much alarmed he was. Eh! said Shiboob, who art thou? My lord, said the fellow, whilst he shook as if in an ague—my lord, said he, I am no horseman. I am no great man; but I am the slave of the magnanimous Chief Amarah. And where is Amarah? said Shiboob. My lord, said he, he is just passed over to the tents of the Carad family, just to have a look at his beloved Ibla, the daughter of Malik; and this has been his practice for a long time every night, and when he reaches this spot, he puts on my clothes, and disguises himself in them, and enters their tents. Ay! said Shiboob, I did not know a word of all this. Accursed be ye both; come, arise, strip off thy clothes, before I cut off thy head.

The slave had just stripped off his clothes, when Antar came up, and smote the slave with Dhami on the neck, and severed his head from his body. In-

stantly Shiboob put on the slave's clothes, and laid himself down in his place, whilst Antar hid himself near at hand for an hour, when lo! advanced Amarah. As soon as the horse saw him, he neighed: I am come to thee, thou neigher! said Amarah, now that I have beheld my beloved. And he came up to Shiboob, thinking it was his slave, and struck him with his stick on the back of the head, saying, Get up, son of an accursed mother, come, strip off the clothes before morning overtakes us.

So Shiboob turned about, and began rubbing his eyes, like one roused out of his sleep, and appeared as if about to take off his clothes, whilst Amarah, having stripped off his clothes, stood naked. At the instant, Antar sprung upon him, and grasped him by the small of his belly, and raising him in his arm, he dashed him against the ground, and then turned to upon him with a whip, till he made the blood start from every part of his body. In short, the agony of this chastisement was so acute, that Amarah fainted. Shiboob came up to him and bound his shoulders, and tied down his arms and sides, and hoisting him on the back of his horse, carried him away. O Arabs, cried Amarah, cover my shame, and if ye are from a distant land, and in quest of property and gain, congratulate yourselves on your success: for I am no paltry fellow; I am the Chief Amarah, son of Zeead, and my party is near at hand; and if you do not sell my life for cattle, you will heartily repent; for my friends will

rescue me without ransom or goods at all. But Antar stood before him, and turned to again with his whip on his body, till his very liver was on fire. Ay, said he, I will redeem the coat of mail with thee, which thy brother took away. Yes! thou saidst to King Cais, Hie thee away! send us thy champion Antar, son of Shedad; let him come and redeem the coat of mail from us here. Then indeed Amarah recognised the dreadful Antar, and he cried out, Pardon, my cousin, pardon! for that is true virtue; don't, now don't punish me, O my cousin, for the flippancies of the tongue; and be sure of every favour you can desire. No more talk! cried Antar, till we reach the tents, where I will contrive every variety of torture for thee; and they drove him on before them to the tents, whilst Amarah endured such a night, as he never experienced before, and when they arrived, every one being asleep, Antar confined Amarah at his mother's: and he appeared in the morning as if nothing had happened.

In the course of the day, Rebia learnt that his brother was missing. He wept, and so did his brothers, and also his mother, and his relations, and there was not one but said Antar had killed him. I rather think, said Rebia, that Cais has set spies and scouts over us on account of the coat of mail of Ajijah, and has seized an Arab in order to redeem it with him. But, by the faith of an Arab, that's what I'll never do. I will, however, plant spies over them, and every one that falls into my power

I will slay: I will carry on for ever a rooted enmity against Cais, and I will aid the Aamirites against him, that he may feel my power; and if Antar has slain Amarah, no one will I put to death as an equivalent but Cais himself, that he may know that one like me will not sacrifice his retaliation for him.

Soon the account of the disappearance of Amarah became public; it was also reported to King Cais, that Rebia accused him of the deed, and that he had stationed spies and scouts over them, that should he be able to seize any one, he might kill him. By the faith of an Arab, said Cais, Rebia lies in what he says; and as to Amarah, he has no enemy but Antar; and Antar has never been absent from the tents. Moreover, I cannot believe he would put him to death, for his mercy is ever superior to his wrath. He has overcome him a thousand times, and has never attempted to murder him; there need be no alarm on that score, he will certainly re-appear: never let it be said, that my cousins are become my enemies, though I am of opinion, we should be on our guard against them.

Thus he recommended the business to his brothers. Go out by turns, said he to them, and protect the pastures, otherwise Rebia may suddenly surprise us. So Malik every day went out on horseback with the cattle, taking with him a body of men, and when Antar understood this, said he to Shiboob, Eh! son of my mother, it appears King Cais then is afraid of Rebia, and he thinks he will join the tribe of Aamir

against him. But as he will not permit me to act against him, what I wish of you is, to go out every day to the pastures, and if you see Rebia, or any one of his family, advance, hasten to me with the news, that I may show you what I will do. Shiboob acquiesced, and went every day to the pastures, concealing himself where no one could see him.

After this, Antar visited Prince Malik, and imparted to him all about Amarah; that he was suffering torments with him, and was almost dead, and he wants to ransom himself for the coat of mail, but don't believe him; and I have not yet punished him enough. O Aboolfawaris, said Prince Malik, overjoyed, kill him whilst the business is a secret. O my lord, said Antar, I have never killed one of the tribe, and should the circumstance reach your brother Cais, that I have exercised my power against his cousin, as long as he lives, he will never be reconciled to me.

Thus passed three or four days, when lo! shouts arose from the pastures. Antar was sitting in his tent, when behold Shiboob entered; Arise, my brother, he cried; come to your friend Prince Malik, or Rebia will slay him; he has surprised him in the pastures, with seventy horsemen of his family. The moment Antar heard this, the light became darkness in his eyes; he roared and bellowed, and sprung off the ground on the back of Abjer, and set out for the pastures, Shiboob going on before. He stared about for his friend Malik, and seeing

him hemmed in with the horse of the family of Zeead, and almost overpowered, he shouted—the earth and the barren waste trembled, and the horsemen shrunk back from the contest. How came this dæmon here? cried Rebia, and he precipitated himself from the sand-mound, and penetrating the dust, wished to attack the dreadful Antar, when lo! his brother Anis appeared, bent double over his saddle, whimpering out, This shepherd-slave has broken my ribs; (for Antar had, indeed, with the butt end of his spear, broken his ribs, and had yelled at him, so he wheeled off in flight, fearful of death).

Rebia slackened his bridle and shouted out to his friends; when lo! some rushed, disordered in flight, from beneath the dust: alarmed at death and destruction, they fell back on their rear, and the fugitives were followed by their comrades. Rebia also retreated. But Antar cast his eyes at him, and beheld the coat of mail of Ajijah. Whither wouldst thou, O Rebia? cried he, and immediately he was up with him, and shouted at him; every limb of him quaked; he pierced his horse through a tender part, and the animal stumbled and threw him off; he endeavoured to rise up, but he tottered and fell with the weight of the Ajijah coat of mail. Antar drew forth Dhami from the scabbard, and was in the act of extending his arm. Hold! O my cousin, cried Rebia, pardon! for that is the true generosity of nature; you are our cousin, and the reliever of our sorrows. May God, said Antar, make thee die and

let thee not live, for never dost thou name me cousin, but when thou art under the scimitar's edge. In the feasts and entertainments I am still the slave, the carrion born! Strip off that coat of mail, or I'll strike off thy head with this sword, by the life of the eyes of Ibla, to me the most binding of oaths. Rebia instantly obeyed; he pulled off the coat of mail, and delivered it to him, and then fled in haste away, scarcely crediting his escape from death. Thus Antar accomplished his hopes and wishes, and taking the coat of mail with him, he returned to Prince Malik; and, as they were retiring, King Cais came forward with a numerous body of Absians; for, having heard the circumstance from some shepherds, he instantly mounted, alarmed for Malik. Seeing him safe and well, he inquired what had happened; he told him what Antar had done to the family of Zeead; how he had redeemed the coat of mail and the cattle. After which, Antar presented him the coat of mail, for which Cais thanked him, and they returned to the tents, rejoicing in their success. As to Rebia, he retreated, routed and discomfited on all sides, and sought his tents and habitations; and when he considered himself secure, he collected his companions and rebuked them, saying, My cousins, you indeed failed to aid me at the very moment I needed you most. O Rebia, said they, what dost thou desire of us? Dost wish us to fight against our cousins, and raise hostilities against our king? Many of them are the husbands of our daughters

and our sisters. Has it not satisfied thee, that we have followed thee to this place, but thou must urge us to contend in battle against those who are the dearest of human beings to us? In this point never will we obey thee. If such is your resolution, said Rebia, return to your families, for I can do very well without you; and he called out to his brothers, and ordered them to depart for the tribe of Fazarah. As soon as Hadifah heard of his arrival, he went forth to meet him, and received him honourably, saluting him, and congratulating him, and accommodating him with a portion of ground, wide and extensive, and inquired his reason for quitting the tribe of Abs. Rebia told him what had passed, and what he had suffered at the loss of Amarah. Your settlement, said Hadifah, in the valley of Yaamoor, was not judicious; had you come to us, we would have exerted our utmost in league with you. But as to your brother Amarah, it must be all owing to Antar, son of Shedad. O chief, said Rebia, our misfortunes always proceed from that despicable slave, and we have no other enemy but him. I must indeed contrive his death, were my life to be annihilated, and all my brothers to be slain. That night came back Amarah, and he was in a most deplorable wretched plight, tiled over with filth and ordure. And when he told his brothers all the horrors he had endured, they were in utter dismay, and greatly augmented was their rage and indignation against Antar, the lion warrior. O my son, said his mother,

will you never relinquish your stubborn violence on account of Ibla and Antar? Are you not satisfied with the calamities and misfortunes that have already befallen you? O my mother, by your dear life, said he, death itself would be more tolerable to me, than what I have endured these days. I have experienced tortures from Antar, in my life, I never felt such from all the Arabs. Wait patiently for us, my fine fellow, said Rebia, that we may open a door for the destruction of Antar. Thus Rebia remained, consulting some plan, till the news of Khalid's departure on his expedition reached him, and that he had thrown himself on Direed, son of Samah, who had sent with him his brother Abdallah, with twenty thousand horsemen, and that the whole of the army of the Aamirites, when complete, would amount to forty thousand men, twenty thousand of which would march against the tribe of Abs, and twenty thousand, under the command of Abdallah, would march to attack the tribe of Fazarah. Hadifah was confounded and bewildered, and sent for Rebia, to consult with him; but they told him he was absent, and that, a short time ago, he had taken away his brothers, with forty slaves, and had proceeded to destroy Antar. Oh! what will become of us? he exclaimed; What will become of Rebia and his brothers? And he sent to request assistance of Harith, son of Zalim, and the horsemen of the tribe of Marah. The news also reached King Cais and the Absians. He was astounded and stupefied, and

assembling the chiefs, told them of Khalid, and the Aamirites, and Abdallah, Direed's brother, and asking for Antar, they told him he was absent. King Cais sent to procure intelligence of his mother, who said to the messenger, a crier cried out to him in the night, and with him he departed. On hearing this, King Cais was unable to distinguish light from darkness. Truly, Antar, he cried, has disappeared at the moment he was most required; and he consulted with the Absians about what he should do. Comfort your heart and brighten your eye, O king, said they, for by the faith of an Arab, we must fight for you, till by our acts we have settled your affairs to your satisfaction, and we will not die but in the presence of our families and our wives. My wish, cousins, said King Cais, is to send to the tribe of Fazarah, and to ask them to come to us, that we may be a united force against our foes. My opinion, said his brother Malik, is, that you be not cajoled by them any more; ask no aid of them, for Rebia is with them. So, my brother, stand staunch for your dignity, and let not your honour and reputation be sacrificed. However, they agreed to send a messenger to Hadifah; he departed for the tribe of Fazarah, where Hadifah was anxiously expecting the return of Rebia, much terrified at the treacheries of fortune. In a short time came Rebia, and his brother Amarah, and some more of his brothers; but as to his slaves, not one of them, black or white, accompanied them. He had entered the tents by

night, and the next day he went to Hadifah and saluted him. Hadifah inquired about his absence. O chief, said he, I have slain Antar, but with him were forty of my slaves killed. O Rebia, cried Hadifah, much rejoiced at Antar's death, a man, when he is engaged in the destruction of his foe, must expend his property, great as it may be. The reason of this was, that when Rebia repaired to Hadifah, and was joined by Amarali, who told him what he had suffered, he consoled his brother's heart, and remained quiet till the next day, when he took away his brothers, and forty slaves, and repaired with them to the land of the Absians, where he halted in a valley, and concealing himself, he sent a horseman to Antar to supplicate his assistance, and to conduct him to the valley. The horseman proceeded till he came nigh to the tents of Antar, when he cried out, O Chief Antar, I am a suppliant for thy assistance. Antar instantly ordered Shiboob to prepare Abjer; he brought him out bitted and bridled. Antar sprung from the ground, on his back, and took Shiboob before him, and followed the horseman, who had begged his protection; and he did not discontinue following him, till he was far from the tents. As to the noble Arabs in those days, when any one demanded their protection, no one ever inquired what was the matter; for if he asked any questions, it would be said of him that he was afraid. The poets of those days have thus described them in verse:

"They rise, when any one in fear calls out to "them, and they haste before asking any questions; "they aid him against his enemies that seek his life, "and they return honoured to their families."

Poets have also thus mentioned those who do make inquiries of him who asks their protection:

"They dispute about the protection on frivolous "pretences, and they lengthen out the conversation "in questions, and when a suppliant calls out to "them in the desert, they snore, or else make them-"selves acquainted with the business."

When Antar was at some distance from the tents, O young Arab, he cried, console thy heart, and brighten thine eye, but tell me now what is the matter, for were thine enemy Chosroe, I would make his balcony totter; if it be the Roman Emperor, I will slay his warriors. O Aboolfawaris, replied the man, stopping, I am of the tribe of Shiban, and with me were my wife and my daughter; I was on a visit to one of my brothers, and when my visit was concluded, I was on my way home; and on reaching your waters, twenty horsemen rushed out upon me; they wounded me, and took captives my wife and daughter. I fled, as you see; and when I heard of your name, and that you were noble and generous, I came to you, and I begged your protection. March on forwards, said Antar, pitying him from his heart; console thy mind, dispel thy fear and alarm. The horseman continued to gallop on ahead of Antar, till he conducted him to the valley, where Rebia had

drawn ropes among the trees for Antar's horse; and when Antar was in the middle of the valley, Rebia's slaves rushed upon him, crying out, Where art thou now? Vile slave, how wilt thou escape hence? The light became dark in Antar's eyes, but he galloped towards the fellow who had begged his protection, and pierced him through the chest with his spear, and drove it quivering out through his back; he shouted at his foe; he attacked, and bounded away on his horse. But his horse being entangled among the cords that Rebia had fastened, Antar dismounting from Abjer, and grasping Dhami in his right, and his shield in his left hand, fought on foot. As soon as Shiboob saw this dreadful disaster, and his brother's awkward situation, he felt assured some stratagem had been contrived against him, so he drew forth his dagger and killed four of the slaves, and Antar slew ten. But they multiplied upon him, shouting and throwing stones at him, and bellowing at him, till they nearly destroyed him; his limbs were unnerved, and he felt his calamity, when lo! another stone fell between his shoulders, and threw him at his full length on the ground. Rebia's slaves pounced upon him, and bound him with cords, and tied down his arms and sides; they seized hold of Shiboob, and bound his arms also with ropes. Bring him to us at the division of the road, cried Rebia, that we may play with our swords through their bodies. Antar recognized Rebia, and the despicable Amarah. Verily, O Rebia, said Antar,

thou hast contrived well; this is a masterly plot indeed. But whilst they were in this state, lo! a dust arose, and there appeared five hundred horsemen in armour. Go thou to Antar, cried Rebia, to Amarah, as the dust approached, whilst I kill Shiboob; then let us be off, or death will come upon us. Amarah assented, and galloping up to Antar, drew his sword with his left hand. Antar was tied on the back of Abjer; Amarah lifted up his hand to strike him; but just as he heaved up his arm with his sword, Abjer started under Antar, and sprung forth like a flash of lightning, and made towards the horses that were advancing towards them, for he had been trained by his master, whenever he saw a troop of horse, to seek it, before they could seek him. Fly, O noble fellow, fly, roared out Rebia, or death and perdition will overtake us. Shiboob was dragged along by a slave, but as soon as he saw his brother, and how Abjer had started away beneath him, he disengaged himself from the hands of the slave who led him, and followed his brother Antar, that he might know all the evil he had suffered. As to Rebia, he fled, followed by his brothers. The troop of horse assaulted the remainder of the slaves, and tossing them upon their spears, stretched them dead upon the ground. They afterwards surrounded Antar in the barren desert. Now these horsemen were Arabs of the tribe of Khoolan, and their chief was a warrior, named Moshajaa, son of Hosan, and

he was one of the famed haughty tyrants, and celebrated knights of the age. As soon as he saw Antar, he recognized him, and cried out to his comrade warriors, O my cousins, slay not this devouring hero; for this hero is called Antar, son of Shedad. I know that our King Safwan has a retaliation against him, for he killed two of his sons; and it is my opinion that we should take him away, and go with him to our dwellings: there casting him into fetters and chains, let us proceed to our King Safwan, and receive from him an immense reward in cattle, in exchange for this lion Antar. As they assented to his advice, they took Antar and Shiboob, and set out on their way home.

Now Rebia and Amarah, as they fled, turned behind to look at the tribe of Khoolan; and perceiving that they had surrounded Antar and Shiboob, and had drawn their swords upon them, they imagined they had slain them; so they eagerly pursued their way till they reached the land of Fazarah and joined Hadifah, to whose inquiries about their absence they related what we have already stated. Hadifah was in ecstasies of joy, and thought Antar must be slain, and his limbs cut in pieces.

In the mean time, the tribe of Khoolan travelled with speed till they reached their own country, where they cast Antar and Shiboob into chains, and stationed a guard of slaves over them. But

Moshajaa, with a party of his tribe, repaired to King Safwan, to give him the good tidings of the fall of Antar, the conquering warrior.

The very day that Rebia arrived, and felicitated Hadifah on the death of Antar, came also King Cais's messenger to order Hadifah to march to the land of Shoorebah and Mount Saadi, that they might all form an united force. But when he consulted with Rebia upon this subject, No, Chief Hadifah, said he, let Cais and the tribe of Abs settle with their foes as they like; for this once we are stronger than they. Cais has now lost Antar: let the enemy kill him, and make him drink of the cup of death and misery. Hadifah accordingly sent back the messenger disappointed, saying, Tell Cais to arrange his own matters as he can, he and the champion of his country, Antar, son of Shedad; for never shall there be any hostile dispute between us and the tribe of Aamir. The messenger returned to Cais, and told him what Hadifah had said; on which Cais, feeling the truth of his brother Malik's advice, assembled the tribe of Abs, and ordered them to prepare for battle, for he had heard that Khalid was in the neighbourhood. They obeyed, and prepared that very day. King Cais then sent for the tribe of Ghitfan, who came the next day, with Hatal, son of Antar's sister, and four thousand horsemen, all spear-armed heroes.

In three days the Absians and Ghiftanians were equipped, to the number of eight thousand horse-

men, all in coats of mail and in armour. My cousins, said King Cais, I am of opinion we should march and meet the Aamirites in the road, before they reach our lands. They assented, and set out to meet the tribe of Aamir; and when their whole army was complete, it amounted to seven thousand men, as one thousand were left to protect the cattle and families. Thus they continued their journey till evening, when King Cais alighted: Now, said he to his cousins, I think we ought not to separate beyond this distance from our wives; otherwise we may have cause to fear for them on account of the enemy. There they remained till morning, when behold! the horses' fronts burst upon them. This was a troop of the tribe of Aamir; the bickering scimitars and Semherian spears glittered. Shouts arose, and the horsemen were eager for the fight and contest. The Absians called out in their patronymics; the spears were interwoven one within the other; the crowds pressed on violently; the rush of the combatants was terrific, and the behests of fate and destiny descended upon them. Rise to arms! to arms! cried Khalid. The Brandisher of Swords exhibited his activity beneath the dust; the cleaving sabres were at work; and the cleft skulls were hewn off. It was a day of dreadful portent, and the Absians felt not secure till the light fled, and the night came on in darkness, when they retired from the army that had thus surprised them; and they saw tribes, the like of which they

had never seen in all their lives. Now, said King Cais to his people, let us return to our wives; it will be the most expedient measure, for I fear some of these tribes may invade our homes, and devastate our dwellings. We have nothing to do but to march before the darkness passes away; for this is indeed an event of fate, and our affairs are in a dreadful condition.

They arose accordingly by night, and set out for their own tents. The enemy was soon aware of it. Khalid gave a shout, and they were all in movement by dawn. The Absians reached their dwellings, and the women shrieked in excess of fear and terror; and when they saw the Absian army return, their screams of woe and distress increased, and became still louder, alarmed as they were at dishonour and infamy. In an hour the action commenced; heads were scattered about; the party was panic-struck, and their rapacious designs were frustrated. The women screamed out to the lion-warriors, and Ibla beat her sides and wept. All the maidens of the tribe assembled like full moons; they uncovered their faces, and let their hair flow dishevelled; they cried out, and exciting them to the contest, they exclaimed, O cousins, where is the valiant warrior? where is he who would protect the women on such a day as this? Then Gheshm, son of Malik, attacked and performed dreadful deeds. They continued in this state till evening came on, and the two armies were separated from each other.

The Absians were discomfited that day, for two hundred of their most renowned warriors were slain. On that night the wailings of the children, and the screams of the women and men, increased; and shrill above the rest rose the shrieks of Ibla, for the loss of Antar, the undaunted hero. Cais himself remained in the greatest affliction. As to the tribe of Fazarah, their condition was similar to that of the Absians; for Abdallah, the brother of Direed, assaulted them with twenty thousand horsemen, and rushed upon them from all sides. The Fazareans engaged them till they were near death and extinction; and had not Harith, the son of Zalim, been with them, they would have been cut up and destroyed; for one noble Knight, when he was with a weak party, could defend it, and steadied it against the enemy. Rebia, too, fought with his brothers firmly and resolutely, though he was also anxious that Cais's inability should be proved; for he knew well Antar was not present in the engagement.

But the tribe of Abs continued to fight with the Aamirites for three days; on the fourth day the foe routed them in the tents, and possessed themselves of their fountains and waters, having completely overpowered them with superior numbers. Good fortune and fear prevailed alternately; heroes exposed their lives to death, for they saw no rescue from destruction; the armies of Aamir thronged upon them like the foaming billows of the ocean,

driving them out of their dwellings. The Absians fortified themselves on the sandhills and Mount Saadi. O my cousins, said King Cais, let us lengthen out the battle with the foe; perhaps one of the heroes of Hijaz may still come to our aid: so they acted in conformity with his commands. But the one who that day was the chief victor over the Absians was the Brandisher of Spears; he had taken fifty brave horsemen prisoners, besides those he had wounded and slain. The army was protected by his intrepidity, and Khalid gloried in his exploits. The last that challenged the Brandisher of Spears was the Chief Shedad; and as he was on the mountain side he remembered his son Antar, and thus he mourned his death:

"Was it seen what arrow of all the arrows "of calamity pierced thee, thou son of the noble "and generous? Who was the warrior whose arm "could strike thee, and thy arm so irresistible in "its blows among the horsemen? Art thou to be "seen dead, laid low on the ground? Shall the "wild beasts of the desert prowl about thee on all "sides? In truth, the tribe has lost in thee a "Knight equal to a host of foot or of horse. Thou "couldst repulse the troopers, and, eager as they "were, they were deprived of their warriors on "the day of trial. O my son, since thy absence "from us, the hostile troops have invaded us, like "giant sea-monsters. Oceans have encompassed "us, rolling in furious waves of the bitterness of

" spears and two-edged scimitars. Our heroes have " fallen into the power of the enemy, and our wo- " men mourn in fear of death. We are enthralled " by horrors, and our maidens are in despair, fearful " of captivity. O son of the noble and generous! " Ibla calls on thee from her ulcered heart, and " weeps in torments of tears. Here I am come " forth this day; I will expose my life, and, aware " of the catastrophe, I encounter the heroes; for " perhaps thou mayst still join us, and we still sur- " vive by thy perseverance, thou protector of the " wives of thy friends!"

When Shedad had finished, the Absian women shouted to encourage him to the fight and combat. Shedad descended, and his back was bent double with his great age, for he was like an ancient eagle. Who art thou, O Sheikh, cried the Brandisher of Spears, thus eagerly moving towards death, and drawing along the bridle of annihilation? O Gheshm, replied he, dost thou not know me, that I am one of the illustrious warriors? I am Shedad, son of Carad. I am a knight, the soul of the day of battle and combat! I am the father of Antar, the destroyer of the stoutest tyrants! Thou art a pusillanimous wretch, continued the other; and immediately assailed him. Shedad encountered him, and there ensued so fierce a contest and combat that the noblest warriors were astonished at its fury. Their long spears were shattered in their hands; they both disappeared from the sight, and were veiled from the eyes of the spec-

tators; again they exhibited in the contest the most skilful manœuvres, and the bravest were aghast at their deeds. They continued in this state till fatigue fell on the fingers of Shedad, for he was no match for Gheshm in feats of arms; and when the Brandisher of Spears saw this he assaulted him like a lion, and clung to the rings of his coat of mail and corslet, and dragged him off his horse's back, dashing him on the ground: his cousins tied down his shoulders, and bound him by the arms and sides. Now rose their shouts still louder at the captivity of Shedad, and their exertions failed, feeling certain of death and perdition. The Brandisher of Spears again returned to the skirts of Mount Saadi; Hola! tribe of Abs, he exclaimed, come forth, if there be any more of ye remaining; if not, surrender; for a surrender is your only resource. At hearing this, the Absians were more furiously enraged. O my cousins, cried Cais, there is no means of escaping death in the presence of these Arabs; and he resolved on the attack, but Nazih prevented him, and wished himself to challenge the Brandisher of Spears. Oorwah anticipated him, and as he recollected his friend Antar, his tears flowed; he hasted on, exclaiming, O champion of Abs, may God not divide from us thy stirrup! and may thy friends be never abandoned by thee! And he thus mourned the death of his friend Antar in these verses:

"The foul wretches have prevailed, O Aboolfa-
"waris, now thou art absent from the land of the

"tame fawn. The Arabs have surrounded our "country, and they charge our heroes like fiends. "The tribe has lost in thee a knight, who used to "encounter our foes, smiling and unruffled. Thou "wert our guardian, O champion of Abs! when "every defender and protector failed us. Now thou "art gone, we are ruined and lost; our supports "have given way, and every one that sat down has "risen up to oppose us. How many women bewail "thee with eyeballs swimming in tears; and from "eyelids that never slumber! How many of our "warriors have been captured! and how many lie "dead among the devastated habitations! There is "no champion for the daughter of Malik, now "thou art gone, thou disgracer of horsemen! Who "now can encounter calamities, now thou art gone, "or wear off the rust in the day of terrors? May "God moisten the tomb where thou liest with "the dew of the clouds, charged with never-failing "showers!"

When Oorwah had finished, he rushed upon the Brandisher of Spears, and galloped beneath the thickening dust: there ensued a combat between them that made heroes shudder, and confounded the most resolute warriors. They continued in that state till their spears were shivered in their hands, and their souls were near expiring. Oorwah was a brave knight, and an undaunted man of arms, but in prowess he was no match for the Brandisher of Spears; so fatigue fell on the hands of Oorwah,

which his antagonist perceiving, rushed at him, and hemmed him in, and grasping him by the rings of his coat of mail, he clung to him, and took him prisoner, and dragging him along, miserable and abject, he delivered him over to his people, who pinioned and secured him. Oorwah being taken, the Absians gave up all for lost. King Cais threw his casque off his head, and cried out to his tribe and his comrades, O my cousins, after this there is no hope, no resource! their word against us is blood. They have vanquished us, and I well know they will not suffer one of us to live, not a black or a white. Let those who feel as I do, do as I do; and those that fear death retire to the rear; for our women are dishonoured, and the blood of our men is shed. Our horsemen are overcome, and our champion is lost: there is nothing left to protect us, or defend our wives, but the blades of our swords and the barbs of our spears. Thus saying, he galloped down from the sand-hills and Mount Saadi, surrounded by his brothers and warriors, and those who stood by him on all important occasions; and when they came to the spot they bent their heads over their saddle-bows, and in one universal shout exclaimed, O by Abs! O by Adnan! and they poured down on the Aamirites like a torrent of rain. Now, my cousins, come on! exclaimed Khalid, as he marked them. See these fellows! they scorn life. Tear out their souls; rejoice in the capture

of their women, and beautiful maidens, and the plunder of their abundant cattle. Then the armies and the troops assaulted, and made at the Absians in all directions, and assailed them with swords, and spears, and pointed lances. The plain was choked up; the associated heroes rushed on; horsemen were exhausted; the two forces were mixed promiscuously; the steeds danced to the sound of the lutes; blood streamed from the bodies; they persisted in these dangers and perils till midday, when the Absians were nearly destroyed, and extinguished, and extirpated; the women cried out to the Lord of Heaven; blood flowed; protectors and defenders were diminished; existence was annihilated; the Absians were lost amongst those armies and troops, and dust-clouds like an extended canopy. There was not one but exposed himself to every disaster, and courted death in the midst of the tumults; the plains appeared before them like mountains; the black dust ascended over them in columns, and they were clothed in garments of blood. Such was their perilous situation, they were nearly destroyed, and had resolved on flight, when lo! a dust arose, and closed up every passage of the country. It was not long ere the dust opened: there was seen the glitter of corslets, and the waving brilliancy of helms, and innumerable horsemen, headed by a black knight, on a black steed, who bellowed out, Ignoble dastards! I am Antar, son

of Shedad; quit these women and children: and he instantly attacked the Aamirites, like a devouring lion, accompanied by his warrior-friends. In an instant the enemy was repulsed, and the twenty thousand were routed right and left. The cause of the release of Antar from captivity, and his arrival with the horsemen, was as follows.

CHAPTER XXX.

When Antar fell a prisoner into the hands of the tribe of Khoolan, they took him to their own country, where Moshajaa confined him between four iron stakes, and stationed over him a party of slaves, saying to his companions, My cousins, this will we continue to do until we receive from our master the reward of our pains, and then we will deliver him up to him, that he may do what he pleases with him. And he instantly set out to King Safwan to congratulate him on the fall of Antar. But the women of the tribe of Khoolan having heard Antar's story, and learnt his punishment, and having marked the immensity of his bulk, and the horror of his form, went to look at him; but the last that entered was a very old woman, a stranger in that land, and as soon as she saw Antar she recognised him. She threw herself at his feet and kissed them, saying, May this accident be the cause of joy to me, O Aboolfawaris! How is it that the nocturnal wanderers of evil have surprised you, and cast you into prison and infamy? The women, on hearing these words, and seeing her kiss Antar's feet, were much astonished. Old woman, said Moshajaa's wife, who is this black slave, that you kiss his feet? May

God be with you, noble ladies, said she, call him not a black slave. By the faith of noble Arabs, men of truth, and honour, there is not on the face of the earth a braver man than this great warrior; nor among the Arab chiefs, or the most illustrious princes, is there one whose munificence is more unbounded, or whose benevolence is more exalted. As to his courage, said the women, we have heard of it; it was clear and evident: but what hast thou seen of his generosity, that thou shouldst thus praise him? I will tell you, said she, and I will relate an instance of his liberality. You all know my son; well! once on a time he surprised some she camels belonging to this young man, and took away about a thousand of them; but as he was returning home to be married to one of his cousins (it was his intention to make these camels her marriage dower), this man, black in skin, but fair in deeds and qualities, overtook him, and rescued his camels, and took my son prisoner, and went away with him to the tribe of Abs; and just as he was going to put him to death, he asked my son about his situation in life, and his Arab descent, and on what account he had plundered his camels. So my son told him he was in love with his cousin, and that it was only on her account he had seized the cattle. Upon this, he ran towards him, and released him, and gave him the thousand camels which he had plundered, and presented him, over and above, three hundred more, saying, When the property you have now in hand

fails come hither to me. My son returned delighted and happy; and soon after married his cousin, and all his sorrows were removed. And now we are living under the aid of God and this youth; and there is not a tribe in the desert but is sensible of his liberality. The women being much astonished at the narrative of the old woman concerning Antar's generosity and benevolence, greatly extolled and honoured him, and then quitted him. They reposed in peace that night, but the next morning the tribe was invaded by a predatory party of horse, consisting of five hundred horsemen, all in coats of mail, and clothed in armour, with a warrior of the haughty tyrants of Arabia, called Mobadir. These warriors and horsemen rushed upon the tribe of Khoolan, whilst Mobadir cried out in a loud voice, O Mavia, for such a day as this have I been anxiously waiting on thy account; and he rushed forward at the head of his heroes, pouncing down like the rush of a torrent. He attacked the tents, and brought down captivity among the dwellings. The cause of his arrival was this: he had long demanded in marriage the daughter of the chief of the tribe, who would not consent to marry her to him; so he watched her father, till having heard that he was gone to King Safwan, he collected these heroes and horsemen, and came to seize her as his captive from beneath the glittering sabres. When the women were aware of this event, they trembled at captivity and infamy; screams and shrieks arose; but the

most dreadful calamity was in the dwellings of Moshajaa, for they had invaded it by force, and surrounded it with misery. There stood Mavia exclaiming, Alas! alas! captivity! Alas! alas! separation from home! This day the foe has vanquished us, and we are for ever clothed in shame. O noble ladies, said the old woman who had described Antar, in this catastrophe there is nothing to be done but to go to Antar and ask his aid, and demand his protection: he is able to destroy your enemies were they as numerous as the sands of the desert. To this they assented, and screaming aloud, went to the place, where was Antar, the lord of battles. Among the first was Mavia, and as they threw themselves at his feet, O Aboolfawaris, they exclaimed, we are under thy protection, and the protection of Ibla, daughter of Malik: we have indeed heard that thou art noble-hearted towards women and maidens.

O Aboolfawaris, cried Mavia, kissing his hands, a calamity has overtaken us, and we implore thy assistance. And she related to Antar all that Mobadir had done to them, from first to last; and when, added she, he understood my father was absent, he came in order to seize me by the force of the cleaving scimitar; and now, O Aboolfawaris, we are between two perilous circumstances, and two deadly calamities; for we fear if we release you, you will avail yourself of the opportunity, and plunder our property, as well as that of the foe, and

then you will seek your own home, and no doubt you will be excused in doing so; for indeed you are near your death and every evil; but if we now quit you, this tyrant will destroy us, both us and you too.' O Mavia, said Antar, console thy heart and brighten thine eye, I will rout these cowardly foes for thee, and I will disperse them among the wastes and the wilds, and I will then return to my fetters and my chains; and I will not depart hence but by the mutual consent of all your men and women; for generous men are not ungrateful, and they do not abuse fortune for exciting troubles against them. Know too that my captivity was only the effect of fate and destiny, from which no creature can escape or fly.

As soon as Mavia and the women heard this, they were convinced of victory and conquest. They ran towards him, and released him from his chains and fetters, and brought him his weapons for battle and carnage; As to your horse, said they, not one of us can venture to approach him. Release my brother Shiboob, said Antar, he is accustomed to him: (Shiboob had been bound close to him), so they set him at liberty. He went up to Abjer and saddled him and brought him to his brother Antar, who sprung from the ground on his back, after he had clothed himself in iron, and a magnificent coat of mail, in which he appeared like a strong battlement. And he assailed the foe with a heart undaunted at death and extinction: he shouted with his well

known shout in his wrath, Ignoble dastards, I am Antar, son of Shedad; quit the women and the children! and he attacked and transfixed the horsemen, and drove them round the skirts of the dwellings: at his second attack he repulsed them from the walls, and slew twenty of them, overwhelming them with shame and disgrace; he charged them like a trampling lion, fearless of multitudes, and thus expressed himself:

"Whenever I go as a guest to a tribe, and they "be alarmed by their enemies, may I never grasp "a spear-staff in my hand, may sleep never seal up "my eyes! My captivity by the Shrine of God is "no fault; for I have been proved in the day of "battles. I was made prisoner by stratagem and "the destiny of God, whose power is infinite over "his slaves, whom he drives, in despite of every oppo-"sition, into bondage, either for their advantage or "destruction."

As soon as Antar had finished, he assaulted the party, and dispersed their united bands, and routed the horsemen, and destroyed their warriors. When the chief saw Antar's exploits: Eh, bastard! said he, what Arab slave art thou? tell me before I cut off thy head, and extinguish thy life for thy opposition to the depredations of the warriors of the age. Mobadir had almost gained possession of the whole clan, and was pillaging the property. Base-born, cried Antar, knowest thou me not? and what noble hero I am? I am Antar, son of Shedad, the

conqueror of hardy warriors! Away to thy home! for as to the booty, I have rescued it from thy power; and if thou doubtest my word, come on—on to the plain—that I may make thee drink of the cup of infamy. Mobadir only laughed, and smiling, said, They say too, that thou art a man that deals fairly, but this day I see thou movest on the road of oppression. I am, said Antar, just what they say of me; but what is it thou requirest that I should do thee justice? Know then, said Mobadir, that I had nearly gained possession of the clan, and seized my beloved; but thou hast interrupted the accomplishment of my desires. Thou bastard, said Antar, thou hast demanded a man's daughter in marriage, but he will not accept thee for a husband; thou hast staid quiet till he was absent on some business, and now hast come in his absence to take her captive from beneath the glittering scimitars; and this is the justice with which thou hast acted towards him. Mobadir rushed at him, and wanted to charge in front of him, and gallop about; but Antar would not permit him even to wheel round, before he attacked him and stopped him in his charge, and checked him in his martial display, and aimed at him with Dhami between his eyes. Mobadir received the blow on his shield, but it cleft it in twain, and his casque it hewed in two, and the sabre still continued its course down to his thighs, even to the back of his horse, seven spans into the ground: thus he hurled him and his horse to the

ground in four equal divisions. Alas! alas! cried Mobadir's companions at the sight of this blow, this furious warrior must be one of the genii; so saying, they fled, throwing away all the property they had acquired, and calling out to Antar, May God curse thy flat-nosed father and thy harlot mother! how hard are thy blows! how penetrating is thy thrust, and how fierce is thy assault! Antar pursued them till he drove them out of that country, and afterwards returned to collect the scattered horses and dispersed arms. Shiboob attended him like one of the rebellious fiends till they reached the tribe of Khoolan.

Antar no sooner dismounted from Abjer than the women surrounded him, and kissed his hands and feet. Noble ladies, said Antar, return me now to my chains and fetters. But they said, By the faith of an Arab, nothing shall touch thy feet, instead of fetters, but the blessings of cheeks. By the faith of an Arab, said Antar, that must never be, were I even to drink of the cup of death and perdition. Eh! son of my mother, cried he to Shiboob, return me to my chains and fetters; let it not be said that I have falsified my word. What! said Shiboob, thou art surely mad. What! now thou art at liberty, and hast vanquished thy captors, wilt thou again cast thyself into chains and fetters, and wait till some one comes to slay thee? Yes! said Antar, let me not sin against my oath; let not a falsehood approach me. Shiboob, on hearing

this, was more and more enraged, and in a great passion came up to Antar, and fastened the weighty fetters on his feet. Well then, said he to him, lie there in base imprisonment, that thou mayest not sin against thine oath! But Antar did not remain in captivity longer than that night; for on the next day the Chief Moshajaa returned with his warriors, and as they came near to the tents, they saw the dead piled up among the dwellings and habitations. Moshajaa also beheld Mobadir's head fixed on the point of one of the tallest spears by the side of his tent. On inquiring about this, they told him what Antar had done. Moshajaa and his warriors were fixed in astonishment. By the faith of noble Arabs, said he, we shall never be able to requite this man by all we can do for him; for whilst we went to demand his death, he has done this deed for us; he has protected our wives and families, and has even returned himself to chains and fetters. Thus saying, they ran towards Antar, the lion warrior, and set him at liberty. Moshajaa fell down and kissed his feet, and bringing him into the middle of the tent, they clothed him in robes of honour, and presented him with riches, and begged his pardon for what they had done. O Chief, said one to Moshajaa, what answer will you make to King Safwan, to whom you have pledged your word? Cousin, said Moshajaa, where can there be a more complete excuse than this? Here is one who protected our wives

in our absence, and has done a deed no human being ever did before. After this they made preparations to accompany Antar, and to depart to the land of Abs. Moshajaa mounted with five hundred horsemen of the chiefs of his tribe.

Antar also set out on his way to the land of Shooreba and Mount Saadi, greatly pleased at the union with the tribe of Khoolan; and as he marched at their head in great spirits, he thus recited:

"Where is my love? my sport? my song? Be-
"gone, my failings of my early youth! What was
"expanded is now folded up. The matrons and the
"large-eyed damsels shall keep me in remembrance;
"torture has not relaxed my powers in the battle,
"and the lion stands in awe of me on the plain and
"the mountain. It has not enervated me, and I
"will not mourn in tears at home and my native
"lands. In horses and black coursers is my de-
"light; love and wine are no more my occupations.
"How can ambition raise any one to glorious emi-
"nence, whose post is in talking of sports and
"songs? My failing is in horses; my boast is in their
"hoofs; when the lion hero moves on them, de-
"spair moves with him. My Abjer blusters with
"me on the day he bears me: is there a hero that
"escapes me? or can a warrior touch me? How
"many warriors have I put to flight in confusion,
"meeting every form of death like a roaring tor-
"rent! As to the dust, I have plunged into it,
"high and low, with sword blows, and spear

" thrusts, among scimitars and lances. I do not
" intend that the tribe shall get drunk with my blood:
" am I not their superior both in word and deed?
" Let no one drink blood but who has a forfeit due;
" and let him not repose, whose neighbour is in
" trouble. The enemy cannot repel him with their
" thrusts; he is replete with virtue, joyous with
" wine. Were not Cais my King, and did I not
" obey him, I would have drank of blood sweeter
" than honey from Rebia and the wretch who re-
" sists me on account of Ibla; still I am in anxious
" fears about her; I am of the noble and illustrious
" ones, ever renowned over the plains and the hills.
" I wish to exterminate them, but my tenderness
" prevents me, and I check my impatience. He
" who wishes to be honoured as I am honoured,
" let him pierce the warriors, or challenge the
" heroes."

The chieftains were astonished at his eloquence, and expressed the gratification they felt. May God never abandon thee! may no one ever harm thee! O knight of the age, and the result of the time and the period! cried Moshajaa, for thou hast not left for any one either a word to speak or a deed to do. Thus they continued their march till they came near to the tribe of Abs. Antar led them on like a furious lion; he uncovered his head, and received the horsemen of Aamir as the parched up land receives the first of the rain, with resistless and never-failing blows, as also the warriors of Khoolan, for

they were undaunted heroes, they penetrated through the ranks of the foe, and made them drink of the cups of death and perdition, scattering them over the plain and the waste.

But when the Absians heard Antar's shout, their souls revived, and they seemed to live again. Ay! my cousins, exclaimed Cais, now take retaliation on the foe, and cast off this dishonour, for this is our champion Antar that is arrived; now destroy your enemies over the plain and the mountain; and he who will not exert himself in the battle, may he never have a legitimate child! The Absians roused all their energy and spirit for the contest. But when Khalid saw Antar approach, he felt aware that he was able to annihilate his whole force, were they even double their numbers, and that he would disperse them over the desert and the sand-hills. So he called out to the Aamirites, and drew them off; they hesitated not, but dispersed themselves over the wilds and the wastes. Now I have nothing to do, said Khalid, but to go to the tents and kill all my Absian prisoners. When lo! they appeared before him, mounted on high-blooded steeds, with Shiboob hardly touching the earth with his feet. For Shiboob, on the arrival of his brother Antar, seeing how eager the enemy was in the contest, felt assured that there must be some Absian prisoners among them; so he set out for the tents of Aamir, where meeting Shedad and Oorwah, and the other prisoners, he hasted towards them, and released

them, and brought them horses, and weapons, and corslets, and armour, and they became warriors again. As soon as Khalid saw them thus rescued from imprisonment and danger, he had no other resource but to wheel round his horse, and fly to the land of the tribe of Fazarah. After him also fled the Brandisher of Spears; the standards and ensigns were upset, and the whole army was scattered over the plain and the waste, pursued by Antar and the tribes of Abs and Khoolan, till they expelled them out of the country, when they returned to their dispersed horses and scattered arms; and having collected their property and baggage, they set out for the tents, Antar at the head of them, like a noble lion. King Cais kissed him between the eyes, and congratulated him on his escape, and inquired what had happened. Antar related how Rebia and his brother Amarah had meditated his death, and every circumstance relative to his imprisonment and liberation.

On hearing this, King Cais execrated Rebia and his brother, and all the race of Zeead, saying, O Aboolfawaris, be not distressed, for by the faith of an Arab, I must punish the race of Zeead for their conduct; but some one says:

"We acted kindly, and we were rewarded by "the reverse, and such is the conduct of worthless "traitors: those who act kindly to persons of a "different nature, are requited as one who assisted "a hyena was requited."

O Aboolfawaris, added Cais, it is, however, incumbent on me to repay the tribe of Khoolan, by all the favours and benefits in our power, and that we consider them among our friends and allies. But we had better go first to the tribe of Fazarah, for I fear their chief must be reduced to extremities, and that we shall have some difficulty in delivering him. Do, O king, as you please, said Antar, for I will not oppose you; but here let us repose. Having halted at the tents, the slaves brought them their dinner, and they treated the tribe of Khoolan with every distinction. They slept that night till dawn of day, when they set out for the land of the tribe of Fazarah, Antar marching ahead, and thus reciting:

"I am going to assist Rebia and his tribe; never
"can I sit quiet when the dust of war is roused;
"were it not for thee, O Cais, I would not go to
"them; but thou art my glory and my protector.
"Fazarah every day opposes me, but they are, in
"the contest, ever under alarms. All the kings of
"the earth fear my blows, and I have an impetuous
"action in the battle, no other knight possesses my
"ambition! Its seat is above the Pisces, and, in the
"combat, my strength is like that of a trampling
"lion. Although my complexion is black, my deeds
"are the dawn of day, and fear of me is in the hearts
"of the most valiant; for I thicken my spear-thrust
"in every region, and I cry out in the heat of the
"carnage, where is my opponent? I am the bold

" lion and hero, as they call on me in the day of the " crash of multitudes. The kings of the earth are " sensible of the terror of my power. In the slaughter " I encounter the vagabond warriors, and my sword, " when the dust mounts on high, cries to me, steep " me in wine, the blood of horsemen; and when my " spear quivers on the deadly day, its barb is like a " kindling flash of fire. For love of thee, O daughter " of Malik, I am a lion hero. O thou ornament of " women in the assemblies! O Ibla, wert thou to see " my deeds and exploits, when the black columns " rise up on the desert, like the darkness of night, " thou wouldst see me rush into it with a violence " and vehemence, no one, either naked or clothed, " can surpass."

The warriors and chiefs, in astonishment at such eloquence, pursued their journey till, as they approached the tribe of Fazarah, they saw that the enemy had surrounded them on all sides; their voices were enfeebled—they were fighting among the tents, and the power of utterance had almost expired. For Harith, son of Zalim, who was with them, as we before stated, seeing the party discomfited, said to himself, Why should I thus presumingly interfere, till I die slaughtered? Accordingly, about evening, he took his men away, and seeking the pastures of the tribe of Fazarah, he carried off five thousand he and she camels; and saying, This is the reward of my trouble, he set out for his own country. But, in his absence, the sword played among the tribe of

Fazarah, and Abdallah, Direed's brother, fell upon them unawares, with his troops. Khalid too, in his fears, repaired to them, and told them the loss he had sustained. Abdallah's alarms were awakened at hearing this account of Antar and the Absians, being certain they would not leave him quiet. Anxious, therefore, to avail himself of the opportunity, and pillage the property of Fazarah, and wishing to retire before the arrival of Antar, he called out to his warriors, and as he encouraged them to the contest, they exposed their lives to death and perdition; and making an assault on the tribe of Fazarah, like voracious lions, they devastated the country, and overwhelmed them with their triumphant superiority. Just as they were resolved on flight, all but Rebia, and the chieftains of Fazarah, and Zeead, and as the wretch Amarah was trembling in despair, with the women, arrived the tribes of Abs and Ghiftan, and the warriors of Khoolan, and Antar, the destroyer of horsemen. With one universal shout of, O by Abs! O by Adnan! they rushed down on the foe with hearts to which death was sweet and easy, and in less than an hour they drove them far from the tents, Antar exhibiting all his horrors, and performing deeds that would turn infants grey; and so astonished was the tribe of Khoolan, at Antar's exploits, that they wished him to return with them, that they might make him the champion of their lands and territory. Before midday, the army fled in disgrace, and Abdallah, giving

the reins to his horse, escaped. After this, the Arab horses were dispersed, and Khalid also fled, and sought the barren waste, alarmed at the chief Antar. The horsemen were scattered over the plains and sand-hills, and before evening, there not being one left, Antar conducted his people, and the tribe of Khoolan, back, and departed for the land of Abs and Adnan. But King Cais halted with the tribe of Fazarah, on account of Rebia, and congratulated him on his safety. Ah, O Cais, where, indeed, is our safety? said Hadifah; but that is of no consequence to thee, that does not interest thee. King Cais concealed these expressions in his heart; he remained that night with them, and departed the next day. But Antar, whilst he was marching with the tribe of Khoolan, meditated on the circumstances that had occurred to him among the tyrants of Arabia, and he thus recited:

"Question my scimitar about my deeds on the "day of battle, and my blows amongst the kidnies "and the joints. Ask my whizzing spear, in the "sand-cloud, how many throats of noblest heroes "I have pierced. How many columns of dust I "have rushed through on my steed, crying out, "with a loud shout, Where is my antagonist? When-"ever Death sees me, he flies away in terror, fright-"ened at my Indian blade and spear. How many "warriors have I laid low with my sabre? whilst "the black blood rolled in waves from the breasts "of the combatants. I have routed, in the fiery

" field, the sons of Aamir, on the backs of their
" snorting chargers. They roam in flight, distracted
" over the desert, horror-struck at my strength, and
" the magnitude of my achievements. Learn, O
" Ibla, how many warriors I have destroyed, how
" many knights, on the day of carnage, I have
" captured, and have then set at liberty, after lace-
" rating their joints. How many heroes have sought
" to slay me, but have not succeeded in their
" attempts, and their every machination has been
" frustrated. I have left Khalid, son of Moharib,
" mangled, stretched out on the stones, and the
" rocks; and as to his ill-starred tribe, I have made
" them drink of death with the wine of absinth.
" Also, in the valley of Torrents, I annihilated their
" crowds, and made Wirdishan drink of the cups of
" the grave. I seized all the wealth of Irak, and
" Chosroe himself arose, bewildered and aghast.
" Verily, I slew Badhramoot in my strength, against
" whom the lions of armies could not prevail. I
" carried off the Asafeer camels for thee, and the
" diadem of Chosroe, unequalled in the world. I
" am the Antar of horsemen—the knight of the tribe
" —merciful and clement—black in complexion—
" intrepid. I am the dauntless hero in every fight;
" I am the knight of the fiery contest of illustrious
" chieftains. Though, my cousin, my complexion
" is black, yet my deeds are fair offsprings of muni-
" ficence. I have that ambition, whose seat is above
" Pisces, and my success and prosperity are the con-

" summation of all good fortune. Mine is perfect " liberality and purest love, and my mansion is the " resort of every guest. All the kings of the earth " dread my power, and my renown is spread through- " out every tribe. My spear-thrust appears in death " and perdition, wherever life pervades the muscles " of man. Death is terrified at me, and even when " he wishes to escape me, I goad him on to speedier " flight with my iron fingers."

The warriors and chiefs having thanked him, they continued their march till they reached home, when Antar alighted and conducted the tribe of Khoolan to the tents. The next day came King Cais, and the Absian chiefs. Antar rode out to meet them and saluted them; and, to his inquiries concerning the race of Zeead, By the faith of an Arab, my cousin, said Cais, had you yourself even fallen upon Rebia, and his brother, you would not have given them bitterer wounds. They now made feasts and entertainments for the tribe of Khoolan, and treated them with every honour and distinction. King Cais presented them with the most beautiful of his horses, the finest of his spears, and the most brilliant of his swords. Antar did the same as King Cais, and gave their chief a string of Asafeer camels, and presented him with five hundred of the she camels of the Volcano Mountain. Thus, the tribe of Khoolan, much gratified at the friendship of Antar, and the tribe of Abs and Adnan, sought their own country and lands. The Absians remained quiet at home; and the state

affairs of King Cais were well arranged under the terror of Antar, son of Shedad; yet he always kept himself informed of Khalid's movements, that he might still have his revenge on him. But Khalid, when he fled, sought the land of Aamir, and though his party had preceded him, and had given the intelligence of their defeat, on his arrival the crisis appeared more disastrous. He assembled the chiefs that very day, and he debated about an expedition to the land of Irak, in order to complain of their situation to Prince Aswad, his near relation. They acquiesced in his wishes, and after they had secured their property and families on the mountain tops, they left the Brandisher of Spears to protect them, together with a small body of men, and departed for the land of Irak. Now Harith, when he quitted the land of Fazarah, immediately conducted his people to their own country, and then hastened with all expedition to the land of Irak, wishing to avert the calamities of the time, and to see how the business would terminate, for he had a sister in Hirah, married to a man called Sinan, son of Ebe Harithah; she was usually employed in suckling King Numan's children, and at that time she was nursing one of his infants, called Shirjibeel. Harith alighted at his sister Selma's, with the view of relating to King Numan what the tribe of Abs and Adnan had suffered from the brave Aamirites, as perhaps he would send some aid to the Absians, and appoint

him to command it. The next day, he presented himself to King Numan, and stated the case of the Absians, and what the tribe of Fazarah had also suffered from Abdallah, son of Samah. King Numan was much mortified, as was also Prince Aswad, on account of the tribe of Fazarah. Numan even wished to despatch that very day a messenger to the Arab hordes, and assemble an army to the assistance of the tribe of Abs and Adnan; but, in the course of the day, arrived Khalid and some of the Aamirite chiefs, who repaired to Aswad with their turbans hanging loose round their neck, and howling in tears, and lamentations, and complaining of the disasters they had endured at the hands of the Absians. What! said Aswad, O Khalid, Harith has just told us, that you had assembled an army against the Absians, and had left them, like many others, the prey of your sword, and my brother Numan has resolved on writing to the Arabs, and to send them to the tribe of Adnan, but now 'tis you yourself that complain of them. Harith was right in what he said, returned Khalid, but he knew not what happened to us afterwards. But we, O prince, were the first aggrieved by the Absians; for King Zoheir falsely accused us of the blood of his son Shas, and outraged us—he slew our warriors; but when I overcame him, and put him to death, I pardoned his wife and progeny. When Cais conquered us, we secured ourselves in the mountains,

but they killed twelve hundred of our heroes in one day, as Antar has described in his verses, where he says:

"We slew of them two hundred and one thou-
"sand freeborn in the defiles and deserts."

When we heard of Nacmah's death we threw ourselves upon Direed, and set out to engage them, and when we had reduced them to the last extremity, their slave Antar came up, and with him a party of Arab warriors: he defeated our armies, and dispersed us. We are therefore come hither that you may make peace between us and them, and for every price of blood we will give ten; only let them set at liberty our women. On hearing Khalid's discourse, Aswad pitied him in his heart; and engaging to accommodate matters, he went to his brother Numan, and related all the transactions between the Absians and Aamirites, and also Khalid's arrival, and that he was anxious to make peace with the Absians. As King Numan thought nothing was more desirable than harmony among the Arabs, he told his brother to introduce Khalid and his chiefs. Aswad introduced them, and King Numan arranged an impartial peace, neither prejudicial nor too advantageous. He also gave them a splendid entertainment; and thus that day passed till evening, when they mutually communicated the various events and circumstances that had happened to them. Soon after, the horsemen having dispersed and quitted King Numan's assembly, Harith, whose

envy of Antar was greatly increased by what he had heard from Khalid, resolved to put Khalid to death, even under the sacred hospitality of Numan. Fixed in his determination, and only waiting till every one was asleep, he sprung up, and cautiously moved towards the tent where Khalid slept. He entered, and finding him asleep, he smote him with Zoolhyyat, and severed his head from his body. He was departing, but it still occurred to his mind that perhaps his blow had not had its effect, and recollecting Warca's blow at Khalid on a former occasion, he returned and placed the edge of his sword against Khalid's chest, and leaned with all his weight upon it, till he plunged it deep through his body two spans into the earth*. Now being convinced he had finished him, he hastened away for his horse; he mounted, and quitted Hirah by night, distraction in his countenance; sometimes turning to the right, sometimes to the left, till the day dawned. At that time Akhwedh arose to seek his brother, but he saw him dead. He shrieked in his horror: he ran to Aswad, and communicated the fate of his brother. Aswad ordered Harith's men to be seized, and they were instantly cast into chains and fetters. Thence he went to his brother Numan, and related

* It is an historical fact that Zoheir, son of Jazeemah, was slain by Khalid, who was murdered by Harith in the private tents of King Numan; and this was the cause of many wars. It is also stated that he in vain sought the protection of other tribes to screen him against Numan's vengeance.

what Harith had done. At this the light became dark in the eyes of Numan, and he swore he would put Harith to death.

As to Harith, after he had slain Khalid, he repented of the deed, and feeling assured he must die, he resolved to repair to the mountains and defend himself there till overtaken by death. But how can I be at ease? he said to himself; my cousins will be all murdered. He therefore set out on his return to Hirah, concealing himself among the mountains and the sand-hills till evening, when he reached Hirah, having first secreted his horse in some by-place. He then sought the spot where his companions were confined; perceiving their guards drowned in the sea of sleep, he grasped Zoolhyyat, and slaughtered them to the number of fifty. Hie to the tribe of Abs, he cried to his friends, and demand protection of King Cais, son of Zoheir, and of Antar, son of Shedad; but as for me, it is impossible for any one of the subjects of King Numan to protect me, for he is the king of the Arabs, but I am resolved on taking retaliation before I am slain: thus saying, he quitted them, and death became easy to him, till he entered his sister Selma's dwelling: and as soon as she saw him she saluted him. O my brother, said she, what has brought you back, safe as you were? I want thee, said Harith, to give me Numan's young son Shirjibeel, that I may meet his father with him to-morrow. I will request him to

forgive me this blood and this crime; and as I was intoxicated when I murdered Khalid, perhaps he may pardon me on account of his child, and then I care not if the whole tribe of Aamir assemble against me.

His sister saw the propriety of this observation; but she knew not the fraud and odious designs he harboured; so she made over Numan's child to him in her fears for her brother. Harith carried him off, and hastened to the passage out of the city, where he remained near his horse till the city gates being opened, and the inhabitants coming forth, he cried out in a loud voice. The people stopped when they saw Harith, and hearing his shout, they stood staring at him as he tossed Numan's child up in the air, and as he fell he caught him on the point of his sword; and the child fell, cut in two, on the spot; and it was a lovely infant! On beholding this, the people ran back to the city, and informed King Numan of the death of his child by the hand of Harith. On hearing the murder of his infant, a flame was kindled in his heart. He ordered his armies to march; and there went forth about twelve hundred men in the pursuit of Harith. But he, as soon as he had slaughtered Shirjibeel, mounted his horse, and made towards the boundless desert; and whilst he was travelling with all expedition, behold! armies, like the rolling seas, appeared. He turned upon them as a lion would do, and shouted; they were dismayed. He shouted again in the faces of

their horses; he forced them back on their haunches, and they cast their riders off their backs. We have already mentioned Harith's superior prowess and intrepidity. He was one of the thousand tyrants: and he did not desist fighting from the forenoon even till the sun turned pale, by which time he had slain about seven hundred horsemen. But by the evening he was almost dead; yet he did not so much grieve for himself as he grieved for his sword, and that the foe should possess it when he was no more; so he went up to an immense rock that grew hard by, and heaving up his arm with Zoolhyyat, he extended his elbow, and smote the rock, wishing to shiver the weapon by the blow, that it might not fall into the enemy's possession, but it split the rock in two, and he continued his flight. When King Numan's troops came to the side of the rock and beheld Harith's blow, their senses were startled; they stopped short, and not one of them dared to pursue him a span's length, saying to one another, By the faith of an Arab, no one will pursue him but he who bids adieu to life, and hails his death! for when he saw no one before him to smite, he smote this rock; but had this blow fallen on one of us, what would have become of him? The twelve hundred being thus routed, returned to Hirah, and told Numan that Harith had escaped in safety. Numan instantly sent for Sinan. Thou vile old man, said he, thou perfidious dog! No one but thou has murdered my son; it was through thee I knew that

Harith, son of Zalim. No one shall ever rescue thee from hanging, unless he give security for thee as responsible for Harith. Sinan gave security for himself that he would produce Harith, were it possible, and if not, he would be his substitute in captivity and disgrace; and this the whole body of King Numan's satraps guaranteed. But what happened to Harith? When he had delivered himself from the army of King Numan, he turned his face towards the wastes and the wilds, and worked hard to make himself a resting-place on the mountain top, eating the herbs of the earth, and drinking of the rain-puddles. As to his companions, whom he had released from Numan's dungeons, and ordered to repair to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, they speeded away till they came to King Cais, and told him how Harith had murdered Khalid. At hearing this from the horsemen of Marah, King Cais was in a transport of delight, and he invested them with honorary robes. The Chief Antar also heard the news, and was overjoyed, though he wished Khalid's death had been the work of his own hand. By the faith of an Arab, said he, if Harith comes to me I will protect him from King Numan, from Chosroe Nushirvan, and from every one that dwells in the wilds and the deserts. King Cais too ordered splendid feasts and entertainments; but as he looked at Antar, he perceived that he eat and drank but little, and did not partake in the pleasures and amusements: so his brothers said to Cais, Outrage

not Antar's heart, but order his uncle Malik to marry Ibla to him, that our joy may be complete. King Cais accordingly sent for Malik, and taking him aside, said, Why do you not wed Ibla to her cousin Antar? is she not his affianced wife? and have you not taken her marriage portion? Yes, O king, said Malik; Ibla, and her mother, and her father, and her brother, are his slaves at his service; and if you wish it, to-night before to-morrow's dawn I will marry her to him. In three days I desire, said King Cais, that our joys may be complete and our enemies be vexed. Malik acquiesced, and stood up to go away after having kissed his hand; and when they separated, Malik went home, and being alone with his wife, he sent Ibla to her uncle's, and as he wept before her mother, What's the matter? said she to him. One has used me ill, said he, out of whose influence I cannot withdraw myself; for his heart is now relieved from the affliction of his enemies, and Antar is even in greater favour with him than with his father. He has obliged me to marry Ibla to him; but by the faith of an Arab, were the head of this vile slave to mount to heaven itself, my heart could never submit to yield him my daughter. Now Ibla's mother felt convinced that her daughter could be matched to no one but Antar, because he had ever protected her. As to Antar, he returned home quite rejoiced at the order for his marriage, and he wanted to mount his horse, and go to his uncle's, when lo! his brother Shiboob came

up to him, distressed and melancholy. What's the news? said Antar; what has happened? Know, son of my mother, said Shiboob, that your sister Merwah is come from the dwellings of the tribe of Ghiftan, and she is in a violent passion, and probably angry with her husband; but she wishes to see you. Antar immediately went to see what was the matter. This Merwah was the daughter of Shedad, and married in the tribe of Ghiftan to a man called Jahjah; and she had a son, whose name was Hatal, who used to mount the horses, practise horsemanship, and was habituated to nocturnal expeditions. His uncle Antar was very fond of him; but when he heard of the arrival of his sister, he hastened to her: she sprung up towards him, and kissing his hand, O my brother, said she, my son Hatal! the heroes of Ghiftan have bewildered his mind: they ordered him to join them, and took him away with them to gain some cattle and plunder. But some nights ago I saw a dream, and there were my son and his companions in a forest all entangled with trees, and over their legs chains and fetters of fire; and at the mouth of the forest there was a ferocious lion that threatened to devour them night and day. I awoke; but I was terribly frightened. I rushed out of the tents, and lo! I beheld a black slave at the door in the garb of a beggar. I went in again, and I brought him out some bean husks, which I gave him, saying, Take these, O stranger! and pray for the return of my absent son. Is not thy

son Hatal? said he. Yes, I replied; and I perceive you know him. Know then, said he, your son has fallen a prisoner into the power of Locait, son of Zararah, and with him twelve warriors of his tribe, and I am come as a messenger from him to you, and he begs you will hasten to his uncle Antar. And now, my brother, I am come to you, and my object is to obtain my son's deliverance through you. Antar was confounded at this interruption of his happiness. Return home, my sister, said he, and calm your mind, for I will go and release your son. I will soon come to you with him and all his property. Thus having appeased her mind, and relieved her of her sorrows, he sent for Oorwah, and told him what had happened; he ordered him and his noble comrades to march, and recommended his father Shedad to keep the affair secret, that King Cais's heart might not be harassed. He took away his brothers Shiboob and Jareer, and his father Shedad, and the Carad horsemen, and his uncle Zakhmetuljewad.

As to Ibla's father, he was rejoiced when he heard this, for he had resolved either to inform Rebia, or to escape by flight into the desert. So the business turned out just as he wished, and his situation was improved after all his discomposure; but when he saw Antar mounted, he said in his perfidy and iniquity, O my nephew, truly Hatal's mother has spoiled all our pleasures by this untoward interruption. Uncle, said Antar, there is a prescribed time

for every thing, and all that is predestined must take place. And he quitted him; and finding his people waiting anxiously for him, he departed with one hundred of Oorwah's men, and two hundred of the race of Carad, whilst Shiboob started ahead of the horse on the road to the land of the tribe of Darem.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Now Locait, son of Zararah, was an uncontrollable knight; he was the bold one of the age and period, and the Arabs called him the Eagle of War, and the Knight of Woe. Locait had nineteen brothers by the same father and mother, and he was the eldest; and their father was conspicuous among men for his birth and parentage.

One day, their father being seated in his tent, his sons came to him, and complained of their brother Locait's excessive pride and haughtiness, and stated their resolution to emigrate. He sent for Locait, who in fact was a great coxcomb in his gait, and most ostentatious in his general deportment. My son, said he (for he was exceedingly angry and indignant at such conduct), you are indeed a most self-sufficient fellow, and behave in a most overbearing manner towards your brothers and your comrades. Had you even in your pastures a thousand of the Asafeer camels, or were you possessed of Bedret-ul-Yemen, the daughter of Moazzem, the lord of the Pavilion and the Palace, or could you even overcome in battle the Chief Antar, the Knight of Hidjaz, you would not even then strut about as at present, neither would you swagger your limbs in

this bragging, blustering style. What! father, said Locait, then these are the three accomplishments which should a man attain, he would acquire the highest glory among the brave and the heroic? What can be superior to these three acquisitions? added his father. At the instant, up started Locait and went to his uncle, and asked his assistance. This uncle was also a brave and valiant hero, and he promised to aid him.

They mounted their steeds, and taking with them two she camels to carry water and provisions, and two sturdy slaves, they quitted their tents under the cover of the night; and when they were at some distance, after consulting which they should attempt first, they were unanimous in the opinion, that they should first of all proceed to the King Moazzem.

Now this king was a mighty monarch, and a stout horseman. He was the lord of armies, and troops, and lands, and cities; his country lay on the borders of the cities of Nihas, and it was called the land of As, where he possessed a strong impregnable fortress, in which was an idol named Jebbar, which this king and his people worshipped. He had also a daughter called Bedret-ul-Yemen, of whom he was very fond; and out of his great affection, he consigned her over to the idol, and rejected every suitor and every wooer.

Locait and his uncle travelled on till they reached the country of King Moazzem, where they beheld populous cities, abundant cultivation, and tents and

dwellings, and spears and swords, at which sight Locait was much disordered; he turned towards the fountains and the waters, and having bathed, and clothed himself in magnificent robes, he with his uncle proceeded to King Moazzem. Near his palace they met the officers and satraps, to whom Locait addressed himself: My wish, said he, is to visit your King. The satraps entered: the King deliberated, but at last exclaimed, Go out, and ask him his name; for if it be Locait, son of Zararah, invite him in; if any one else, turn him away: for thus has the idol ordered. Moreover, I saw a dream, in which I was standing in front of the idol, and I demanded of it a husband for my daughter. In these days, it replied, there will be sent for thy daughter a valiant husband, and a brave hero, called Locait, son of Zararah. Marry him to thy daughter, and let him share in thy favours (but this dream was the result of his fears about his daughter).

So the attendants went out, and asked Locait his name. He said, Locait! The King Moazzem admits thee, said they: and he entered in the presence of the King, who directed him to be seated; and having also imparted to him the dream he had seen, he prepared feasts for three days, after which he pitched the marriage canopy, and introduced Locait to his daughter, without marriage, any dower, or donations. Locait went to her, and saw she was a full moon no description can attain; but he was ashamed to approach her without a wedding present,

lest he should become a scandal in every land. So he turned his back towards her, and slept till the damsel also fell asleep; when he started up, and awoke his uncle. Arise, my uncle, said he, let us repair to King Numan to procure a marriage dower: and they sallied forth by night.

They rapidly continued their journey till they reached the city of Numan, and by great good fortune they met Harith, roaming like one distracted among the deserts, for they had heard of his adventures.

Locait no sooner saw Harith, than he pounced down upon him like an eagle, crying out, Eh! son of Zalim, whither wouldst thou seek refuge from the great King and the lion warrior? Harith, on hearing this address, and seeing him alone, felt his courage rise against him, and shouted out, Hola! O Arab, What man art thou? tell me quick. Surrender, said Locait, ere thou diest!

Upon that, Harith poised his spear, and let out his horse on its speed, and charged at him. Each rushed upon his antagonist, and commenced the combat, that lasted till the day was darkened, when Harith being exhausted by the contest, Be generous, thou Arab, he cried, and outrage not a man, whom the sufferings of this widely-extended desert have debilitated. Take me prisoner, and perhaps it may be productive of good. And he threw away his spear, and stood still. Locait thinking he had surrendered himself, Dismount, said he, that I may

pinion thee. Promise me, said Harith, that thou wilt not concert with King Numan for my blood.

And he continued his insidious importunities (his intention being only to protract the contest a little), till he drew forth his sabre Zoolhyyat, like a flash of lightning, and fell upon Locait, like the descent of an overwhelming calamity, and smote him. He cleft his casque, and the chains, and wounded him; and had not Harith been previously exhausted, he would have slain him.

Locait repented of what he had done; the world seemed darkened in his eyes, and the blood streamed down his face: but when Locait's uncle saw him in this condition, he rushed upon Harith, and occupied him in the contest till Locait had recovered, and regained his senses; and his return was like the return of a lion. He shouted at Harith, and drove at him with the heel of his spear, and hurled him on the ground: his uncle dismounted and pinioned him.

Early next day, Locait resumed his journey till he reached the land of Irak. In the excess of Locait's good fortune, he arrived during Numan's days of festivity*, when he clothed every one in splendid

* It had happened that Numan, in a fit of intoxication, had ordered two of his companions to be killed. When he recovered, he was so struck with remorse, that he raised a tomb to their memory, and set aside two days in every year, one of which he called his day of sorrow; the other, his day of joy. On the first, whomsoever he met, he slew on the tomb; on the other, whoever came to him he would load with gifts, and grant every request.

robes; and as soon as the slaves beheld him, they crowded towards him from every direction, and continued to load him with robes of honour till his horse could move no further.

King Numan being informed of the circumstance immediately mounted, his heart bounding with joy, as he exclaimed, This is indeed a joyous day, and a real triumph over foes and enemies. He received Harith from him, and cast him into a subterraneous cave, and there left him. But Locait presented himself to Numan, who complimented him, and asked his rank, and parentage, and his tribe, and his Arab connexion. My lord, said he, I am of the tribe of Darem, lords of honours, and distinctions, and spears, and swords; and I am Locait, son of Zararah. Be so obliging, said Numan, as to demand what you want, and be sure of attaining it in these days of joy. Upon this Locait took courage, and informed Numan of his marriage, and the cause of his expedition; and I ask of you a marriage dower for my wife Bedret-ul-Yemen. By the protection of an Arab, said Numan, had you demanded my kingdom, I would have made it over to you. And he ordered him a thousand Asafeer she camels, to which he added an infinity of other things, as he said to his attendants, Do ye also give this youth all the cattle and flocks that you drove to the pastures this day. After this, he ordered them to pitch tents for him without the city, and convey him wine and meat.

Three days Locait passed very merrily, but on the fourth he departed, habited like a powerful monarch, with horses, and mules, he and she camels, and slaves, and cattle; and with his uncle he continued his journey over the deserts; and the world was too compressed for the excess of his joy and exultation. As to the father of his bride, his misfortune was severe; for his countrymen irritated his heart with reproaches; yet he expressed outwardly his resignation, and concealed his affliction and vexation till Locait's return with the cattle and the camels. The whole country was in confusion with delight: the King himself went out to meet him, with the grandees of the tribe, and saluting him, inquired whither he had been? O my lord, answered Locait, you acted towards me on my arrival here as no one ever acted before, and heaped upon me obligations beyond my powers to bear; you even married me to your daughter Bedret-ul-Yemen; but I could not submit to the idea of possessing the daughter of a king without a marriage-donation, and I be called too the Knight of the Universe: so I went away to seek some gain, and the God of old has bestowed on me these favours.

Thus saying, he gave orders to his slaves, and they led away the noble steeds, decorated with housings of gold, and the Asafeer camels, which are the wonders of wonders, and exhibited all he had of garments, and cattle, and high-priced jewels. The King was astonished at the extraordinary things he

beheld, and he gloried in such an illustrious husband for his daughter. He made splendid feasts, and sent for musicians, and made his daughter a second marriage-banquet. He married her to Locait, and all his griefs and troubles were at an end. Thus they caroused and feasted till the day dawned.

After a stay of seven days, Locait prepared for his departure. The King granted his permission, and made him immense presents in cattle. Bedret-ul-Yemen having taken leave of her father and mother, they raised her on the back of the camel; but the King accompanied her one whole day, as a last farewell of her. On the second day Locait requested him to return; and he continued his course, having succeeded in all he had coveted, and as he travelled on, passing over the wilds and the wastes, he thus recited:

"I have succeeded in my object and demands of
"fortune, for I have possessed myself of Bedret-ul-
"Yemen by my sword. She is indeed the full moon
"when it rises over her tent; the rosy-coloured
"moon, that lights up the desert for my distracted
"love. It is as if the sword of her father flashed
"from her eyes, that vanquish hearts without laws,
"human or divine. Her beauty is so perfect, the
"sun might envy it, when it rises in all its splen-
"dour over the dwellings and the lands. It is, as
"if beauty's self fraternised and associated with her,
"as the soul of life associates with the body. Were
"she to call a ghost from the tomb it would an-

" swer, and from its shroud would say, Here am I. " I have possessed myself of her by my sword, having " broken the hearts of all her suitors by my ven- " turous trials. To-morrow will the spectators be " amazed at my ambition, when I draw along the " train of my glory in my native land. When I " draw my sword in the battle, I make knights bow " to it from Senaa to Aden."

When Locait had finished, he continued over the deserts, when lo! Antar's nephew, Hatal, and his companions, drew nigh. Seeing Locait, and the cattle he had with him, his avidity was excited, and he ordered his men and warriors to desire him to abandon his property. But Locait, in the pride of his character, paid no attention, but rushed upon him with all his impetuosity; and they fiercely engaged, till eight warriors being slain, and twelve more being prisoners, he assailed Hatal, and exhibited against him all his wonderful powers and terrors; but they were not long engaged, before he took him captive, and united him to his comrades. Being much surprised at his prowess, Of what tribe art thou, said he, for I never yet beheld thy equal? O Chief, replied Hatal, I am called Hatal, and my maternal uncle is Antar, son of Shedad, the knight of battle and war: it was he who instructed me in this horsemanship and dexterity in the spear-thrust and sword-blow. O my uncle, said Locait, turning towards him, there never was so fortunate an expedition as this; for thou knowest the cause of my departure

from home was the scandal of my father, who, when my brothers complained of me, said to me, Were even a thousand Asafeer camels in thy pastures, and wert thou to marry Bedret-ul-Yemen, the daughter of the lord of the palace and great pavilion, and wert thou to overcome in battle Antar, the Knight of Hijaz, thy deportment would not be such as this, nor wouldest thou swagger thy limbs in all this presumption. I am now arrived at two of these distinctions, and I am now reaching the third, as I have taken this lion-youth prisoner; for he is the son of Antar's sister, and his uncle will unquestionably come to release him as soon as he hears what has happened to him; and then will I fight him in the presence of my father.

After this he set out, traversing the mountains and valleys in ecstasies of delight, till he reached his native land. The good tidings had preceded them; his father had been very anxious on his account, till being informed of his son's approach, he went out to meet him with his brothers, and the aged Sheiks of the tribe. As soon as he saw him and the quantity of cattle he had with him, he was overjoyed, and inquired what had happened. Locait related his adventures; he established himself in the dwellings, and the horsemen of the horde stood in awe of him. He made entertainments for them all, and in the excess of his self-admiration, and his anxiety to meet Antar, he despatched a slave to Hatal's mother, as if from her son.

But now let us return to our former narrative. Antar and his father Shedad continued their journey with two hundred horsemen of the family of Carad and Oorwah, and his men, seeking the land of the tribe of Darem; and as they hastened over the sand-hills, Antar was very melancholy at this interruption of his joys, and thus he spoke:

"My transports are silent; but my grief, how "can I conceal it? In my heart is the flame of "love, that consumes it. How can I disguise my "situation? it is evident. How can I deny it? "My tears disclose it. I say, my heart is at rest "about my love of thee; but it is a prey to anxiety, "and it cannot change. Oft, as I say, my fortune "is bright and pure, the nights of absence return "to renew its sorrows. O Ibla, how can I endure "with patience my distraction? My fate resists "me with every open outrage. I am seeking Hatal, "to rescue him from captivity, and I will disgrace "whoever puts him in fear. I will make Locait "see the exploits of the lion Antar: he shall shrink "from me, and I will expose him to peril."

They travelled on till they came nigh unto the land of the tribe of Darem, where they repaired to a lake, and halted to consult on what they should do. My opinion, said Shiboob, is that you ride on for the rest of this day, till you know that you have passed beyond the abodes of the tribe; and when you are in their rear, conceal yourselves whilst I depart for the tents, and on my return I will explain

to you how to surprise them, and seize their property, and rescue Hatal and his companions; thus you may succeed in all your wishes, and we return home. You are perfectly right, Shiboob, said Antar.

Shiboob accompanied them till he was certain that he had conducted them beyond the dwellings of Darem. Now, pursue your way, said he, to the valley of Ramla, which is ahead of ye; there conceal yourselves, and move not till I return. He took with him his brother Jareer, and clothed himself in a jacket of coarse cloth, with wide sleeves, and put on an immense turban, that closed over his face.

Thus they went on till they reached the tents, when the slaves sprung towards them in all directions, inquiring who they were. We are messengers from the tribe of Aamir, said Shiboob to Locait, son of Zararah; where shall we find him? Repair to that great pavilion, said the slaves. Upon that Shiboob advanced, and Jareer followed him; and they found Locait seated at the door of his tent, and his brothers round him, and all his cattle scattered about. Shiboob penetrated through the crowd, but before Locait could question him, May God grant long life to the noble Chief, he exclaimed; the honoured Prince, the Lord of great emprise, the Chief Locait, Chieftain of the tribe of Darem. Hail to thee, too, said Locait (to whom this discourse was very gratifying, and who was greatly surprised at the fluency of his speech), O Arab born, speak thy purpose, make known thy demands. What manner of

man art thou? I am, my lord, of the tribe of Aamir, your friends and allies, said Shiboob; and I am come to you with intelligence that is exactly to your wish. My master Ahkwedh, son of Giafer, has sent me to you out of his great regard for you, saying to me, Go to my brother Locait, and tell him that Antar is proceeding with a party of warriors in order to rescue his nephew Hatal, and his companions; and I am alarmed on account of his violence; but if there should be any good opportunity, make him drink of horrors to suffocation, and should he know any thing of Harith, who slew my brother Khalid, in the sacred hospitality of King Numan, let him secure him for me; and if Hatal is still with him, let him despatch him hither, and I will send in his stead as much cattle as he desires.

By the faith of an Arab, said Locait, in admiration at the sweetness of his language, this slave is an eloquent fellow. May God bless the tribe that makes its slaves resemble princes and chiefs: as to Harith, said he to Shiboob, I took him prisoner, and I presented him to King Numan, and I have received in his stead camels and horses. As to Hatal, he is with me in bondage and confinement, and when his uncle Antar comes to release him, I will accelerate his death, and thus will I accomplish the three distinctions, on account of which my father shamed me; and I will not leave one of the Absians to tell the tale. Moreover, I am determined to depart to-morrow morning to meet this black slave.

O my lord, continued Shiboob, expressing his thanks, if you would but be so obliging as to make over to me those foul wretches, I should be so glad to have the chastisement of them whilst they are in confinement, till you return from this expedition, bringing with you the tribe of Abs and Adnan in chains and captivity, and at their head their slave Antar: then will I return to my master Ahkwedh, son of Giafer, and tell him all about it. Youth, said Locait to Shiboob, did your spies say with how many horsemen Antar was coming against us? Yes, my lord, said Shiboob, he is coming against you with a thousand horsemen of Ghitfan, and the tribes of Abs and Adnan. Locait laughed and smiled at this; May God disgrace the mustachios of that bastard slave, cried he. And he ordered his slaves (according to the decrees of fate) to deliver Hatal and his companions over to Shiboob.

As soon as the sun had risen over the mountains, he took away with him three thousand of his choice warriors, leaving five hundred horsemen to protect the cattle and families. He departed, roaring in his rage against Antar; and he knew not that he whom he sought was concealed in his rear. No sooner were the dwellings deprived of their protectors, than Shiboob sent his brother Jareer to inform Antar of all we have mentioned.

Jareer traversed the deserts in quest of his brother, and told him of Shiboob's contrivances, and that Locait had set out with his warriors and horsemen.

Greatly delighted, Antar ordered his comrades to equip themselves with their arms, and to prepare for the contest. He instantly departed, and by morning reached the lands of the tribe of Darem, where he saw the cattle grazing, which his men attacked, and drove away all they could of he and she camels, whilst the slaves ran home exclaiming, Woe and death! The horsemen mounted, and the troops hastened from every direction, intending to redeem the plunder, all clad in armour and corslets, well accoutred, and determined to resist. But Antar having already sent the cattle away with fifty lion horsemen, stopped with the remainder; and when the enemy came up, heroes shouted out at heroes, and they stretched out their spears, and commenced a furious battle, driving with their lances, that wrenched out lives. They smote each other with scimitars till blood gushed forth, and streamed, and filled the whole desert.

Antar overpowered them with his impetuosity and intrepidity, forcing them back till the fight was continued close to the tents, and the women were nearly reduced to slavery and infamy. Screams arose; the slaves rushed out; maidens sought their protectors and defenders; and existence seemed annihilated. Shiboob had made himself known to Hatal and the rest, and told him the real state of the case, and the plans he had adopted; at which they were much delighted, rejoicing at the prospect of release from captivity and ignominy.

Now Shiboob seeing the tents vacated by the horsemen, and every one employed in the contest, released his friends from their fetters, and brought them horses, and a sufficient supply of arms, saying to them, Now, away to your cousins, and aid them. Accordingly, Hatal rushed on, followed by the others. They shouted, they assaulted, they bellowed, they fought, till the people of the dwellings resolved on flight, having resisted till evening; but Antar goaded them so fiercely, that they were all huddled together with the women. Upon that he retired, and night coming on with darkness, My cousins, said he, our companions are released from captivity; and it would ill become us to enslave women in the absence of the warriors. It will be better for us to return hence, and renounce all outrage and violence. And I, said Shiboob, will conduct you over the extent of the desert, and by cutting across the mountains and the plains, by morning I will bring you out in a distant land. Do, O Shiboob, as you please, said Antar; perhaps we may soon reach our own country.

Shiboob set off with them early in the night, whilst he himself kept in their rear till sun-rise, when he conducted them down to the waters of Caiwan; here they halted, and rested their horses.

Shiboob still directed them across the deserts and wastes by unfrequented paths, till he approached the land of the tribe of Aamir, where he made them travel along by-roads, and halt till night, when he

desired them to drive on the camels and horses, and pursue their way in haste, and before morning he had left the enemy behind him, but he said not a word about it to his brother. Well, Shiboob, said Antar, what are the dangers we have left behind? Son of my mother, replied Shiboob, you know well, that between you and the tribe of Aamir there is an enmity of long standing, and particularly that Brandisher of Spears, and Ahkwedh, son of Giafer. At hearing this Antar was much disordered. Thou son of a dog, said he, and so thou art afraid of a numerous body of men! By the faith of an Arab, had I known what thou wert about, I would not have left the tribe of Aamir in peace and quietness. They halted, till the day was spent, and then departed, seeking their native land: now Shiboob cast round his eyes, and behold a dust arose, and closed up every vent in the country. It will be as well to prepare for battle, said he to Antar, and not move hence till we exactly know what all this means.

Having stationed the he and she camels in their rear, they advanced towards the dust, and waved their spears. Soon the cloud cleared away from an army like the drifting sand, and horsemen like fragments of a mountain. All were in coats of mail, and breastplates of great weight, and with them were camels, and horses, and cattle, and women, and children, and the shrieks of woe convulsed the mountains. Now then it is all evident,—The truth is apparent, cried Shiboob to Antar, our property and

our families, my brother, have been a prey to calamities; our abodes and our lands have been pillaged; and if my apprehensions are right, this army is of the tribes of Aamir, of Ghani, and Kelab. They have vanquished our country, and have rooted out every vestige of us. Thou art right, brother, said Antar, and now I hear the voice of Ibla, and the women of the Carad family. On this day shall be made known the virtue of the brave. This calculation was correct, and the cause of it was Alikwedh, son of Giafer, in whose heart was a sparkling flame against the tribe of Abs. In his fury against them, and his alarms of their invasion, he stationed spies and scouts over them to bring him news. Thus matters continued, till he was informed that Antar was gone to the tribe of Darem, and with him some of the noblest warriors. He also learnt that Rebia and his brothers were still with the tribe of Fazarah. Well, said he to the Brandisher of Spears, what say you, O Gheshm, to an expedition against our foes, thus insuring retaliation during the absence of their slave? Very right, said Gheshm, and accordingly they assembled the Aamirite horsemen, and those of Ghani and Kelab, and there came six thousand well equipped, all brave fellows. Leaving one thousand to protect the dwellings and the country, he marched till he reached the land of the tribe of Abs; where, dividing his army into three corps; he surprised the Absians under the veil of the night, when, most of the people being asleep, he put them to the sword,

and before the morning rose in smiles, he had possessed himself of the tents and dwellings. King Cais had fled with his brothers, and those who were able to escape. The horsemen were scattered about, and sought the land of the tribe of Ghitfan; some betook themselves to Fazarah, and the tribe of Abs was completely disorganized, and ruined. In the morning the Aamirites returned home, after having taken prisoners the women, and plundered their property. They travelled in haste, triumphing in the success of their wishes, for the greatest part of the Absians had been driven away in despair; many of their horsemen were wounded, and no people were ever reduced to such a miserable state. The Brandisher of Spears being under some alarm, lest King Cais might turn upon them, and bring troops and armies against him, hastened their march, till they met Antar and the Absian horsemen. Now the whole tribe appeared through the dust, and Antar heard the screams of the women, and the lamentations of Ibla. He rushed towards the quarter of the women, and pounced down upon them like an eagle. His noble horsemen followed him, for he was chiefly anxious to release the prisoners from torments. When the tribe of Aamir recognised him, they shouted, and the Brandisher of Spears exclaimed, How lucky is this rencounter, than which none more beautiful was ever traced on the leaves of history! Attack this slave-dæmon, my cousins, he continued, that we may erase out for ever every

vestige of the tribe of Abs. Come on! come on! Antar made at him with his whole might; then rushed on the whole army. Antar met them with the horsemen of his tribe, for they were horsemen that would mount even lions; they received the spears on their chests, harder than stones and rocks. Antar was at their head, with spear-thrusts that made their very skins shrivel with horror, and in an hour, their ensigns and standards were upset, and his horsemen were like one man on that celebrated day. Spears were extended; the stern-faced heroes assailed, and the most tenacious of existence were prodigal of their lives; whilst they all tasted of sorrow and wounds. Antar roared at their head and shouted; horsemen drank cups from death; the women instantly heard his shouts, and they exclaimed, Oh glorious morning! Antar, the grasper of lives, is come! and they prayed for his victory and triumph to the Source of the Clouds and the Conqueror of the Winds, who opens for his servants the gates of life without a key. Praise be to him! may he grant sinners repentance and grace! They continued in this dreadful state, till the brilliancy of the day being converted into the darkness of night, the two armies separated from the blow and the thrust, after they had been engaged in a contest that would have turned youth to age. There were laid low of the tribes of Aamir, and Ghani, and Kelab, about seven hundred horsemen, over the face of the land, and five-and-twenty of the Absians

were slain, and as many wounded. Yet they retired from the combat, like wild beasts when they start from their dens, and behind them was the lion Antar, and his nephew Hatal. And having alighted, they began to consult and deliberate how they should engage that numerous host. As for me, said Antar, were the battle to last a whole year, and around me were to assemble all the tribes and hordes of the desert, I will not stir hence, till I release the women from the hands of the foe, and I disperse them over the wastes, and the wilds. As for me, by the faith of an Arab, I will not leave of all these five thousand, no not an old or a young one; as for me, I will offer myself alone as their antagonist, and I will make them taste deep of misery. After all their exultations, their warriors and their chieftains will I slay. Thus he remained, watching over them in the obscurity of the night.

As to the tribe of Aamir, when they quitted the combat and halted at their post, bewildered at the tribe of Abs, and at their assault, they complained of their situation to Ahkwedh. If this dæmon continues to assail us, he will not leave one of us alive, particularly since he knows Ibla is with us. O my cousins, said Ahkwedh, if we do not make a general attack upon them to-morrow, the Brandisher of Spears being with us, we can never hope to succeed. Speak not, O chief, said the elders, in this manner: we never can succeed against Antar, we cannot overcome him, whilst he has behind him men like wild

beasts, all of whom protect his rear. Were I not afraid, said the Brandisher of Spears, of Shedad, and Oorwah, and Hatal, I would go out against him to-morrow, and would engage him, and take off his attention from you, till his companions might be all destroyed. But I also fear King Cais may overtake us with the Arabs of Hijaz, and powerful armies, which we shall be unable to resist; we shall be obliged to fly, and abandon all this booty. My cousins, if the business is indeed, as it is represented, said Ahkwedh, I will send away the prisoners with one hundred valiant horsemen, and when morning dawns, we will by some means contrive the destruction of Antar; and if there comes an irresistible force against us, and we resolve on flight, we shall, at any rate, have the advantage of the property and booty. This will do, said the Brandisher of Spears; for Antar, if he knows this, will go after them, and then we will attack his companions and destroy them: but should he stop, after he receives this news, his heart will be so pre-occupied with Ibla, that his resolution will fail, and he will be in despair. We will make a sudden attack, and complete our wishes, for he never could engage this tempestuous ocean but when Ibla is present. After this harangue, they despatched the captives with one hundred horsemen, and sent with them the guide, Kimhar, who led them away under the veil of obscurity; and when daylight shone, the first that started forth to the fight was Antar, and he knew nothing of what

had happened. The armies of the tribe of Aamir arose, like the ocean when it roars. Ahkwedh shouted out towards them, and assured them of the entire ruin of the Absians, for they consisted of four thousand well-known horsemen, and the Absians only amounted to one hundred and fifty; but their hearts ever anticipated victory and conquest, relying on the intrepidity of Antar. With such resolutions they engaged; they pierced each other with Redeinian spears, and they smote each other with their edged scimitars. Calamities and evils were magnified, and men felt anguish as they expired. But God aided Antar and his deeds, that day. How many warriors laid he low! How many heroes and brave men did he reduce to despair! They continued in this state till mid-day, when Antar seeing the Brandisher of Spears plying his cleaving sword among his comrades, instantly fell upon him, like the descent of a ravenous eagle—he closed with him; and as he exhibited all his wonderful prowess and courage, he shouted at him in a voice that terrified him; he manœuvred with him for an hour, till having exhausted him, he thrust out his hand towards the rings of his corslet, and was about to throw him on the ground, when lo! a dust arose, and a black cloud of sand mounted on high, and beneath was seen the glitter of armour, and the gleam of spears, and men fearless of death, and undaunted, exclaiming, O by Darem! and at their head was Locait, son of Zararah, like a frantic eagle,

and round him were his brothers, like devouring vultures; and when they came nigh to the field of battle, and saw the engines of war revolving, they rushed upon the Absians, like greedy lions, for they had heard the shouts and cries, and had distinguished friends from foes. When Antar marked this occurrence, and saw all the troops directing their lances towards him, he let go the Brandisher of Spears, and turned to defend himself. The horsemen encompassed him on all sides, whirling their sharp sabres about his body, and he felt assured of death. But the Absians fought like men in despair; the thin blades laboured among them; death and annihilation were let loose upon them; and had not the God of heaven assisted them, not one of them had survived to taste of water.

They continued in this dreadful contest till the darkness separated them; after the Absians had lost twenty valiant fellows. Shedad and Oorwah, and a number of the Carad family, were wounded: they were surrounded by the foe on every side, and every way of access and egress was cut off. Locait having rescued his property, and rejoicing in the accomplishment of his object, hastened to Alukwedh. The Aamirite Chiefs thanked him for what he had done, and, to their inquiries about the cause of his arrival, he told them what had passed. When Antar heard of the departure of Ibla and the women for the land of the Aamirites, he laid down; he was sorely afflicted for his companions and the

captivity of their women: grief and melancholy, such as no heart of man or fiend ever felt, fell upon his soul, and his gall was bursting. Turning towards the noble Absians that survived; Although I feel, said he, as if my life could not last beyond this night; yet to-morrow morning I will challenge these armies that surround us on all sides—I will shame them with their numbers—I will call them forth by hundreds and more. If they do this, I shall succeed in my project, were they even as numerous as the sands of the desert: if they assault, I will destroy these armies in your presence, and I will rescue you with spears and cleaving scimitars; I will protect you with my vehemence and perseverance till you reach the land of Shureba and Mount Saadi; then will I return alone against them, and I will overwhelm them with my strength and my power, or my skin shall be flayed off with the barbs of their spears. O my son, said Shedad, there is not one of us that will abandon thee whilst thou art alive, were our lives to be reduced to collar-bones and shoulder-blades. Thus also said his nephew Hatal, and all the rest. The two armies reposed, some feeling secure, and some apprehensive, till, day dawning, the fierce Absians arose for the contest, and their souls bade adieu to their carcasses. The universe was convulsed with shouts; the foe resolved to attack them with swords and spears, when lo! Antar started forth into the field, and rushed forward, determined in his mind to do some-

thing that might be recorded of him, and perhaps remove his grief and distress; then he thus recited:

"We are a tribe that fear not annihilation; we "regard not the results of calamities. How should "we? Death draws up his skirts, and we en- "counter him with our noble spirits. There is not "one of us that fears death; for death is pre- "destined to every one alive. Come forth, then! "behold the lion of the den, resolved on chasing "the wild beasts in the midst of the deserts. "He dreads not the warriors in the field of battle; "he fears not the most numerous hosts; he comes, "and this day ye shall feel his powerful thrusts, "and his blows that cleave skulls. If I live, I "will succeed; if I die, I shall fall, slain by the "separation from my beloved. The peace of God "be with thee, daughter of Malik; and now this "day will I ply my sword-blows among them."

Antar had not finished, when, from the quarter of the tribe of Aamir, there arose a dust that darkened the day; and lo! there arose another dust, and it appeared from the quarter of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and it was more extensive than the former, and the shouts more tumultuous and more terrific; and the horsemen, who were beneath it, were eagerly pursuing their march, headed by King Cais. As to the first dust, it discovered the captives of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and all their property, and their leader was a knight, with shouts

and roars, vociferating, I am Harith, son of Zalim. Victory and conquest are thine, O Aboolfawaris! for the lion-warrior is at hand. The cause of this event was, that when Harith had slain Khalid in the private apartments of Numan, and had also murdered his son Shirjibeel, as we mentioned, Locait took him captive, and delivered him over to King Numan, who confined him till the days of festivity should expire. Mootejeredah learnt what had happened, and was not grieved at it, for he had killed the murderer of her father. So she sent to him five slaves, who had been brought up with her as her brothers, and ordered them to exert themselves in his liberation. Tell him, said she, to go to the tribe of Abs, and proceed to my brother Cais, and Antar, and demand their protection. The slaves went forth accordingly, and waiting till they found an opportunity, they entered, and slaying the guards placed over him, they gave him his liberty, and mounted him on a horse.

Harith set out, travelling over the wastes, not crediting his escape till he had passed the tribe of Aamir, when lo! he met the Absian captives, and their property under the conduct of the hundred horsemen. Harith was delighted. The Aamirites did not recognise him, but they made at him, and surrounded him. He stood firm, and cried out, Well! would ye exhibit your cowardly superiority against me, a single person? Ye are ignorant of my rank; for I am he who slew your Chief Khalid, son

of Giafer, and clothed ye with the greatest shame. Calamities were easy to him; he assaulted them, and his vehemence became still more furious, till mid-day, when he had slain seventy of their bravest horsemen, and the remainder resolved on flight. The Absian slaves released their chiefs, and the women also assisted them. The nobles being liberated from the chains and disgrace, started forth like ravenous lions, and surrounded the remainder of the Aamirites, whom they destroyed to the last, and left not one alive. With expressions of gratitude to Harith for this deed, they alighted in that place, when Harith related to them the various accidents that had happened to him, and what Mootejeredah had done for him; and I am now going, he continued, to your King, to demand his protection. Alas! said Malik, Ibla's father, such distresses as have befallen our King and people were never felt by the heart of man. And he informed him of their captivity, and that Antar was now fighting. Return with me, said Harith, this moment to Antar, that we may join him in the contest, and aid him in these adversities.

But as to the second dust, it was the dust of King Cais, who arrived with three thousand of the renowned Arabs of the tribe of Ghiftan, and they were come to rescue their property and families; but they were abandoned this time by the tribe of Fazarah. As soon as King Cais approached the troops and armies, he uncovered his head and at-

tacked, his companions doing the same, and shouting, O by Abs! O by Adnan! whilst Harith and his followers shouted, O by Marah! O by Dibyan! At this cry, Antar's heart took courage, and was calmed. He roared and bellowed in his well known voice: Hail then the day, so inauspicious to the foe! As Locait had already imparted to Ahkwedh the occurrences between him and Harith, he was greatly amazed at his release; shouting out to the tribe of Darem, he rushed upon Antar and Harith. King Cais assailed the foe with his party, and confronted the tribe of Aamir. In less than an hour the two armies were promiscuously thronged—the dust arose—the scimitars laboured—the barbs pierced the sockets of eyes—blood gushed out from the nostrils—the noble steeds were thrown down—the swords hacked right and wrong—ribs were broken, and waists cut through. Antar and Harith performed deeds that confounded beholders. Harith's heart was full of rage against Locait, so he sought him over the plain, as he hewed off necks and throats with his sabre, till the earth was crammed with carcasses. Antar also wished to bear himself the weight and evil of the battle; so the flame of war blazed furiously, and the blows continued among them till the light departed; and on that day the tribe became a proverb. At last the two forces divided, and the tribes of Aamir and Darem were defeated. Locait retreated in repentance; for six hundred of his horsemen were slain,

and three times as many of the Aamirites, who were annihilated; and when they halted, the battle was calmed, furious as it had been. Antar met Harith, and to his inquiries about him, he related his adventures from beginning to end; and now, he added, I am come to demand your protection, O Aboolfawaris, and the protection of King Cais. Antar having tranquillised his mind, and promised him security, Harith was rejoiced, and thanked him. Antar went to King Cais, accompanied by Harith, and told him what he had narrated, and how he had aided them with his exploits. Cais thanked him for his friendly exertions, and promised him assistance, and the extinction of his oppressors. At hearing this, Harith thus addressed him:

"Hola! hail to your lands and your tents; as "long as ye live, hail! hail to the man who seeks "your asylum, whom troubles and adversities have "oppressed! I have endured things not to be ex- "pressed in words, not to be described by all my "powers of speech. I have plunged into horrors, "and I am come in haste to a King who extin- "guishes foes and heroes. O Cais, thou art an "active hero, and a knight whose accomplished "wisdom defies all imitation. I must tell thee, "that I slew Khalid, and made him drink to the "dregs the cup of death. Truly thy sister released "me by force from prison, when I was watching, "and all around were asleep. I retaliated for thee "with my scimitar—I have redeemed thy due from

" him who was thy foe—I have travelled over the
" deserts till I reached a party of Aamirites, with
" whom were thy captives: they were in ignominy;
" they were mourning in anguish the cruel vehe-
" mence of the dusty fight. Ibla too was shrieking
" in captivity, and her tears were streaming down
" her cheeks. She was exclaiming in her disgrace,
" Where is Antar, that he might see my dishonour,
" and what I suffer in my debasement? I released
" the captives from them with my furious assault,
" and in my heart I loved and pitied them. I am
" now come from the land of Irak, bent towards
" thee to seek thy protection, thou noble-born!
" Art thou not the brave in war, Antar, to whom
" the stalking lions bow in submission? O knight
" of Abs, to thee I make my complaint, my sorrow,
" and griefs; to thee, who feelest no affliction. Be
" my support then, O Absian youth, and aid me;
" for he who seeks thee, is soon free from pain.
" Protect me against Numan; there is none but
" thou to defend me from myself and from dreadful
" events; for when thou appearest, thou art feared
" and dreaded; and thy perseverance resists every
" attack. How many are the horses thou hast left
" plundered of life, and their riders sleeping on the
" earth! When they hear thy name on the day of
" battle, fear may be seen fluttering in their hearts.
" Every tribe knows, that where thou art the bat-
" tlement, there dwells no affliction. All the kings
" of the earth fear thee in battle, for thou standest

" alone brave among men. Asylum and refuge " can never fail mankind: thou art the protection " against the adversities of fate—thou art raised up " to the brilliant shooting stars by courage—thou " hast raised thy station above Pisces. Mayst thou " never decline in glory, in eminence, and honour, " whilst the sun shines, and darkness disappears! " O Cais! O crown of Kings! one whose exaltation " no one can attain, protect me, for this day I am " come to thee to try thy protection, thy faith, and " thy engagement."

King Cais was much pleased at Harith's verses. By the faith of an Arab, said he, were Chosroe or the Emperor of Rome to demand thee, they shall never set eyes on thee; and thus also Antar swore, saying, Extinguish all thy fears and apprehensions, and be afraid of no mortal man. They then reposed in joy and happiness, and their enemies in sorrow and affliction, till the day dawned, when they renewed the fight, and bodies and souls were spoiled by swords and spears. It was a dreadful calamity, and a scene that would have turned infants grey, till about mid-day, the tribes of Aamir and Daren being defeated. Antar mangled their horsemen with his irresistible thrusts, and made skulls fly off with his sword: he chopped off hands and wrists, and hewed off wrists and joints. The Brandisher of Spears encountered Harith—they engaged—the combat raged between them till their blood flowed—they saw woe and misery, and the

earth and sky disappeared from them—they continued till the day closed; still they persisted in their deadly spear-thrusts; but at last the tribes of Aamir and Darem took to flight. The Absians, seeing their confusion, pursued them, destroying them with the cleaving scimitar, till the whole country was obscured. Then the Absians retiring with the spoils of the warriors, and their arms and corslets, and dispersed horses, reposed in that spot, after they had expressed their thanks and gratitude; every one congratulating his neighbour on his safety.

In the morning they departed with the women and families, and plunder, and cattle, and set out for their own homes. Antar delivered the booty he had taken from the tribe of Darem to his uncle Malik, saying, O uncle, when I possessed myself of this plunder, I laid it aside for the celebration of the wedding-feast. My nephew, said his uncle, we will soon accomplish your wishes, and on reaching home, we will occupy ourselves only in our pleasures. Antar's heart was comforted at these words, and soothed at this promise; but the words of his uncle were all fraud and guile, and his heart was full of rage and resentment. When we arrive, said King Cais, who also heard this, we will only wait three days, and then we will marry Ibla to Antar, before any other impediment comes upon us; for our foes are many, and we have traitors amongst us: moreover, the calamities of fortune are not to be trusted,

for we are not secure from King Numan, should he demand the aid of Chosroe, King of the Persians, against us, or should he invade us on account of Harith, son of Zalim. Then they hastened over the wastes and wilds; as Antar, by the side of Harith, thus recited:

"I have opposed the revolutions of incontro-
"vertible destiny. I have endured absence and
"separation. I show the sentiments of love for a
"tribe that would renounce me, and truly their
"hearts evince no sincerity. I ease with hope my
"sickened mind, and with exemplary patience that
"never ends. My foes abuse me for my swarthy
"complexion; but some of my deeds should wipe
"off that blackness. Ask the tribe of my acts, O
"Ibla, and those who witnessed my exploits and
"warlike deeds. I repulsed the horse and the war-
"riors round me as they brandished their long
"spears in their hands. I plunged impetuously
"into a sea of death, whilst the flame of war was
"furiously blazing: I returned tinged with the
"blood of foes, and the foam of war, that drenched
"my steed. How many did I rescue from the
"dreadful scene in the glorious path of firm-
"ness, reviving hearts with my sword two-edged
"and luminous, whose point would cleave the
"hardest rock, and a spear, whoever was pierced
"with it, the perfect light never revisited his eyes!
"Were it not for my sword, and the barb of my
"spear, I could never have raised a firm support

" for the Absians. I am Antar; well known is my " reputation, that I am the knight of the noble " steeds."

At hearing Antar's verses, Harith's heart was gladdened, and he extolled him (for Harith was the vilest of men, and full of guile, and it was only his fear of Numan that made him humiliate himself: he also knew that all the united Arabs could not protect him, so he humbled himself to the tribe of Abs, and confided in Antar). They continued their journey till they reached their country. As to Malik, Ibla's father, all his projects had failed; he was melancholy and distressed, and he felt assured his daughter must escape out of his hands, and that Antar would be married to her, whether he liked it or not. So he took his son apart, and told him his secrets. My opinion, said his son to him, is, that you send to the tribe of Fazarah, aad acquaint Rebia and Hadifah that Harith is with us; that he has demanded our King's assistance, and has confided himself to Antar: perhaps they will inform King Numan of this intelligence. On hearing this, Malik was aware that numerous advantages would accrue from it; and he immediately sent to Rebia to complain of his situation, and to inform him of what he did know, and what he did not know.

When they reached home, they pitched their tents, and being well established and settled, all the country and dwellings seemed secure in their inhabitants, and smiling in the return of its occupiers;

and it was all in confusion with feasts and entertainments, and convulsed with jollity and merriment. Antar conducted Harith to his habitations, and passed most of his time with him, anxiously expecting his uncle would fulfil his engagements, and on King Cais he depended for assistance and favour.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FIVE days after, came Khemisah, Ibla's hand-maiden, to Antar (he was at his mother's). O my lord, said she, be on your guard against your uncle Malik and his son Amroo; be not deceived by their words and promises, for he has broken his engagements. Now just about that time a messenger came to him from Hadifah and Rebia, desiring him to entice Antar out to the lake of Zat-ul-irsad, by professing great love and affection for him. There we will suddenly surprise him, and put him to death, and thus be relieved from his persecutions. We will just give you some slight wounds; so that when you return home, and King Cais questions you about the circumstance, you may say, some predatory horse surprised us; and as we were intoxicated, they treated us as you see; and thus you will remove this dishonour from your daughter! I have learnt this, continued Khemisah, from one of Rebia's slaves, called Maktoom, who loves me with the most faithful attachment. He communicated to me this plot. The maiden quitted Antar, whilst he formed his conjectures about what she had told him.

Now Rebia wrote to King Numan to inform him about Harith, and that he was with the tribe of Abs and Adnan, who had resolved to defend him against the world, and that Antar had also given him his protection. He also imparted to Malik, Ibla's father, what he had done. Antar continued in his doubts and his fears, till one day his cousin Amroo came to him, saying, O Aboolfawaris, my father invites you to a feast at the lake of Zatoolirsad. On hearing this, Antar entered his tent, and put on his most magnificent robes, under which he still kept on his coat of mail and breastplate; and as an additional precaution, in consequence of Khemisah's warning, he also girded on his famed Dhami; and Shiboob brought him Abjer. Antar mounted, and, together with his brother, proceeded to the lake of Zatoolirsad, where he found Malik expecting him, and his slaves were standing in front of him. He advanced, and received him kindly. Antar thanked him; but they had not been seated long, when they brought dinner, and afterwards the wine; and in the course of conversation, said Malik to Antar, I wish you would send to your friends, and invite all your associates, as many as you please, that we may decide on the marriage-feasts, and complete all your wishes: it is my intention not to leave out any one, high or low, but to have them all at the banquet, there to clothe the widows and orphans, that your name may be

celebrated: so do just what you please. Antar's heart was comforted at these words, and his mind felt quite at ease.

After this conversation they pushed about the wine-goblets; the damsels sung, and the time passed agreeably away, whilst Malik kept turning about to the right and left; and, as he cast his eyes towards the plains and the sand-hills, he continued coaxing Antar, and making him drink, till Antar perceived the slaves winking at each other: at this he was roused, and on his guard; and Khemisah's words were verified. Shiboob stood by him with Abjer's bridle in his hand, sometimes keeping close to them, sometimes walking round them, when lo! he saw the slaves encircling Antar, and Amroo clapping his hand on his sword, waiting the signal from his father. Shiboob set up the roar of a lion; Rise! rise, son of my mother! he exclaimed; quit these foul villains, for in their hearts are nought but intrigue and guile. Antar started up; he drew his sword, and was about to ply it among the slaves, when lo! the horsemen of Fazarah appeared, headed by Hadifah and Rebia, exclaiming, Rush on him on all sides; make at him with spears and scimitars! Antar on hearing this prepared to mount Abjer, when cried out Malik to his son, Smite him with the polished sword, and prevent him from mounting, thou poltroon! Accordingly, Amroo struck Antar about the waist, and cut through his clothes, and reached the coat of mail, which we before mentioned;

so his attempt was foiled, and his expectations were frustrated. Already was Antar on the back of Abjer; he grasped his destructive spear, and made towards the troopers, before they could attack him, cursing his uncle, and upbraiding him. He met the warriors, and Shiboob flew before him, like a fawn; his bow was in his hand, and his quiver full of arrows. Antar pierced their chests with his spear, and Shiboob hurled them over with his shafts through their eyeballs and their throats. As to Jareer, he was quite frantic. Your projects, ye sons of adultresses and whoremongers, have failed in the chase of the devouring eagle, he exclaimed.

The day was nearly spent; but the obscurity did not come on before Antar had overthrown the horsemen, and had dispersed them; and the plain and the desert seemed too confined for them; they felt the blows and thrusts that hewed their armour: had a lion heard them, he would have fallen or fled. The warriors were scattered over the wastes, and they felt assured of destruction and calamities. But Antar overtook Hadifah, and as he was about to pierce him with his spear, Shiboob anticipated him, and smote Hadifah's horse with an arrow; he stumbled, and Hadifah fell. Antar dashed at him, and struck him the blow of high indignation, and cut through the two coats of mail, which enveloped him with its closely knitted rings, and the sword penetrated to his joints. Quitting him, he rushed at Rebia, and shouted at him; but he wheeled round in flight,

and endeavoured to avoid him, for, seeing his attacks that terrified him, and his blows that made him shudder, he cried out, What mean these assaults of drunkards? these blows of intoxication? this slave can never fight but death is at hand; and every achievement becomes easy to him. And he sought the tribe of Fazarah; and those who wished to escape followed him; but those who remained Antar left stretched upon the ground. Haml returned for his brother, who was lying on the earth; he dismounted, and fastening him on the back of his own horse, carried him off, following Rebia, whilst Antar's sword still played amongst those that lagged behind. At last retiring, he thus exclaimed:

"See what the foe has done; but I am the conqueror over every rebellious unlamented enemy. I have a sword whose brilliancy flashes like lightning, and when my hand wields it, it sparkles like the shooting stars. I have a spear whose barb exterminates the foe, and leaves him dead on the dusty earth. Whoever wishes to meet me, to him I exhibit death how easy, and life how difficult. They wished to destroy me; but my firmly-grasped sword is in my hand, and the genii of the earth dread my blows. I am the Antar of horsemen in the field of battle. I pounce down upon the heroes, and they are satiated with my thrusts."

He then returned in quest of his uncle Malik and his son at the lake; but he could find nothing of them (the fact is, he determined first to bind up

his wounds, and then to confine Ibla, and absent himself from the tribe). They must have returned to the tents, said Shiboob, and to-morrow there will be a deal of talking and disturbance. They set out for the dwellings, and reposed till morning, when Antar, being recovered from his intoxication, sent for Shiboob, of whom he inquired what had actually occurred. He accordingly detailed every circumstance; in confirmation of which he also produced his corslet, and lo! it was dyed in blood. Just then came in Khemisa in haste; O Abool-fawaris, said she, my mistress Ibla sends her compliments, and informs you that her father and brother have fled, vowing that they will never dwell with the tribe whilst you are in the country.

The cause of this, and the disgrace of Ibla's father was, that, having failed in his plan to destroy Antar, he was ashamed to return to the tents and habitations. Here we can no longer remain, said he to his son; I am resolved to repair to King Numan, and demand his assistance to soothe the sufferings I endure from this slave-demon. I will also inform him, that Harith is with the tribe of Abs, and that they have protected him; and this deed will be the cause of their total extirpation: and if Antar should be slain, against whom we have laid so many snares, then indeed all will end well; we will marry your sister to some one, under whose benignity we may live, and under whose awful influence we may be secure. Away! continued he to his slaves, seek the pastures;

tell Ibla, that I am become a wretched wanderer in the desert through fear of her infamy, and if she wishes to preserve her honour inviolate from the talk of the slanderers, let her seek refuge with my brother Shedad, for there Antar will never presume to wound her modesty. Upon this, he set out with his son early in the night, and travelled with all speed, on horseback; but the slaves returned, and informed Ibla and her mother of what had passed. I will not go, said Ibla, to the dwelling of my uncle: I will not stir from my mother's side. I have no suspicion of my cousin; for he will protect me from both strangers and relations; and never shall I be a captive whilst he resides among the tents. Having reposed till morning, she desired Khemisa to go to her cousin Antar's, as we have already observed.

Antar's heart burst; he felt as if his soul had quitted his body; and whilst he was in a state of profound melancholy, Oorwah and Harith visited him, and as they bantered him for his being so retired, he related what had occurred with the tribe of Fazarah, and that Rebia had sent to inform Numan of all that had passed; and, added he, between him and us enmity and war must unavoidably arise. As to King Numan, said Harith, trouble not yourself about him; for if I hear that he is marching against us, I will only take ten horsemen, with whom I will set out, and destroy his armies and camps. As to your uncle, O Aboolfawaris, it would be better to seek him: take with you one of

King Cais's brothers; follow him, conciliate him, and bring him back to the tribe on account of his daughter; for some one thus says, "the sorrow is "relieved, and the pain diminished that inflames a "love-sick youth, particularly when he complains of "his misfortunes to a compassionate heart."

As Antar listened to Harith the tears gushed from his eyes, and his phrenzy became more violent. Just then entered a messenger from King Cais, saying, O Aboolfawaris, my lord King Cais summons you to his presence, for a messenger from Hadifah is arrived, stating, that he has a grievous complaint against you. Upon this Antar mounted, and repaired to King Cais, before whom he dismounted, and saluted him. O Aboolfawaris, said Cais, what is the meaning of this affair? how could you drink to such excess as to commit so outrageous an act? O King, said Antar, what have I done to deserve such a reproof? Hadifah's messenger has just arrived, said Cais, and he states that in consequence of your blows he has been nearly reduced to an untimely death; and he has couched his message thus—O Cais, I rode out one day with a hundred of my noble horsemen, and my cousin Rebia was also of the party. We passed your way, that we might congratulate you on your safety, and make our apologies for not joining your expedition, or assisting you against the enemies that had rebelled against you (the truth is, we had then a large body of horse in Yemen, which is but just now returned

in safety). We went to make our compliments, but Antar started up against us, when he was at the lake of Zatoolirsad; he was intoxicated; he slew my men, and overthrew my heroes, neither did he desist till he met me. But I imagine that when he saw me he was ashamed, for he instantly lifted up his arm with his sword and struck me, intending to murder me; and had not his uncle kept him off from me he would have followed us even into our country.—Great King, said Antar, by the truth of him who rooted firm the lofty mountains, and has the power of life and death, and makes the rain to fall in his bounty and munificence, verily all this is false; they only came to assist my uncle to destroy me, and to shed my blood. And Antar related every circumstance to the King, from beginning to end, adding, My uncle has quitted the country, and fled; there is no occasion for me to appeal against them, for their enmity towards me has been evinced a thousand times, and whenever my uncle appears a little inclined towards me, Rebia communicates with him, and estranges his heart from me: but as to what they say about the party of horse in the cities of Yemen, they tell the truth; for Hadifah and Rebia, when they knew that I was gone to release my nephew Hatal, sent after me one hundred horsemen, promising them cattle in recompense for my death. But Locait fell upon them, and slew most of them. All this has befallen me, and I concealed it from you, for fear they should say, Antar

commits violences and outrages; but I will soon show them the consequences of tyranny and oppression when the enemy returns and disgraces them.

King Cais easily distinguished the truth from the falsehood; for he was now put into the direct, straight-forward road. Return to Hadifah, said Cais to the messenger, and tell him, Cais says, by the faith of an Arab, there is no truth in thy words; Antar is right, and his evidence unquestionable. Moreover, every one that advises me to banish Antar from the tribe only wishes my destruction, and annihilation, for I am a man with many foes, and few allies. How often has Antar rescued your wives and families from infamy and disgrace; and moreover, I will not interfere between Antar and the tribe of Fazarah, for they have provoked him a thousand times. Thus he sent back Hadifah's messenger, and took Antar to the tents, where he learnt all his sorrows and the outrages he had endured.

Antar had remained in this way five days, without relishing his meals, or sleep, when Ibla and her mother sent for him. Know, my cousin, said Ibla, that your uncle and his son have turned their faces to the desert and the wilds; it would be advisable for you to go after them, and pursue their track, for this has happened to them by the advice of Rebia; so be kind to my father on my account. Antar's heart was instantly calmed. Returning home, he sent for Oorwah, and his father Shedad, and summoned Harith, and his uncle Zakhmet-al-

jewad, to whom he related the conversation that had passed with Ibla and her mother. I am resolved, added he, to follow my uncle, when it is dark. I will punish him for his conduct towards me in thus listening to the advice of those accursed enemies. I have only sent for you to ask your advice on this point, and to recommend Ibla to your kindness, for I fear my expedition will be long. As to Ibla, said Shedad, she shall not stir from my dwellings, and she shall be kept for you till your return. See how it has turned out, just as I before mentioned, said Harith; let us two go together. By the faith of an Arab, said Oorwah, I will not remain apart from you. I must be of your party, for when you are away from the tribe, all the country is black as night, in my eyes. Antar expressed his thanks, they made every preparation, till the gloom of night coming on, they mounted, having first drowned themselves in armour, and mailed themselves in corslets, and girded themselves with scimitars, and slung their spears over their shoulders. Shiboob went ahead, like a male ostrich, and when they were at some distance, said Antar to Shiboob, Conduct us by a road where we may meet neither friend nor foe. Come then with me, said Shiboob, and see the miracles I will perform; and when I have brought you out of this land, I will arrange every thing to your satisfaction. Thus they hastened over the wilds and the sandhills, under the night, till they came nigh to the land of the tribe of Aamir, where

Shiboob having concealed them, said to Antar, It will be well for me to go forward, and bring you some news. Away then, said Antar. Shiboob put on the clothes of a pauper of Yemen, and set out traversing the countries and plains, whilst they remained in anxious expectation of his return all that day and night, till the morning, when Shiboob appeared like an ostrich, and with him a slave, as black as a thunder-cloud, whom he was dragging along with a rope round his neck, and when he stopped, he shouted at him, and pulled him with all his force. Antar was amazed; Who is this slave, Ebereah? said he. This is the slave of Ramih, son of Sabah, said Shiboob, and from him I have had some news of your uncle and his son; he has informed me, that they are with his master in torments, and disgrace, and his master is the chief Ramih, the lord of the tribe of Jibhan, and he is threatening them with death, morning and evening; for when I quitted you yesterday evening, I penetrated into the land of the Aamirites, and there this slave met me, advancing from the quarter of the valley of Zorood. Who art thou, wandering in the obscurity of the dark night? said he to me. Of the tribe of Aamir, said I, and what dost thou want? Son of my aunt, I am of the tribe of Jibhan, replied he, and my master has sent me to Akhwedh, son of Giafer, and the Brandisher of Spears, to congratulate them on the fall of Malik, son of Carad, and his son, into troubles and difficulties with my master Ramih; so that

they may come to him, and witness their death, for they are their enemies. At hearing this my reason fled, and my distress increased. Come along with me, said I to him, that I may conduct you to the tents of Akhwedh, son of Giafer, for he is my master. So he went along with me, my hand locked in his, whilst I continued to question him about the circumstances of Malik and his son's accident, and kept occupying his attention, till the wings of darkness were spread out, when I gave him a cut over the shoulder with my dagger, and having mastered him, I bound him fast, and here he is. At this, Antar's wrath was kindled into a burning flame. He went up to the slave, Whence art thou coming? said he. From the land of Aniziteen, my lord, replied he. And how was it your master obtained possession of that Absian and his son? asked Antar. Know, my lord, added the slave, that my master, Ramih, was returning from a feast, to which he had been invited, and with him was his wife, Daad-ool-aamiriya, and also a horseman called Abd Minah, who is the champion of our country, and the knight of our tribe, and as they came nigh home, they met this Absian and his son, travelling over the sands; so he took them prisoners, and returned to his own country, where he chastised them in the severest manner, chaining them up with the dogs. On this, Harith ran up to the slave, and, raising his sword in his hand, smote him, and severed his head from his body, saying, O Aboolfawaris, it is my opinion, we should

traverse the land, and perhaps we may overtake your uncle, and rescue him from torture; and I am convinced that, after this affair, he will be like a slave to thee. O Harith, said Antar, were I to perform every act the tenderest friendship could imagine, it would only increase his hatred and obstinacy; but with me he has a powerful intercessor, and that is his daughter Ibla, for whom my heart is cauterized, and "she is the life that animates me, and for one "eye let a thousand eyes be protected."

They continued on the road towards the land of Aniziteen, and Shiboob conducted them across the wastes, followed by Antar and his comrades. As Antar thought of what his enemies had made him suffer, and how he had submitted to be subdued, he thus recited:

"The revolutions of the world are easy to me; "its inhabitants are of no account to me, and they "are of little value. In every scene of war there "is a report of me; whenever they hear that "warriors were disgraced in it, I raise the dusty "storm, and the steeds charge, weighed down with "the indefatigable horsemen. I do deeds no one "else can do; were other horsemen to do so, they "would be exhausted. I consent to be degraded "among men. I respect them, but my death they "esteem lawful. I am patient, on account of my "beloved, though they outrage me. I cannot re- "linquish my passion, but no pity do I find. Per- "haps fortune will favour me with possession; for

" after the bitterness of absence, how sweet will be
" enjoyment! I am the Antar of the Absians, and
" my name fills the atmosphere, hill, and dale. I
" thirst for the blows of the flaming sword, and the
" brave are rendered infamous through me. I send
" them back, and they fly light and swift, and com-
" plain of the spear-thrusts of which they are
" wearied."

Harith was much pleased at his expressions, and his eloquence, and being much surprised at his generosity, O Aboolfawaris, said he, had any part of what has happened to you happened to me, I should have slain my uncle, and every one that depended on him. I should have plundered his property, and have taken away his daughter, and made his wife a captive. That, O Harith, is what I will never do, said Antar, were I to drink of the cup of death, for could they even make me quaff of perdition, I can never do but what they please. I well know that what is fated must come to pass. Thus they travelled on over the wilds, till they reached the haunt of lions, near which was the abode of the tribe of Jibhan. Here they arrived about evening, and, halting in a by-place, they began to consult. Say not a word, said Shiboob, till I enter among the tents, and see how many horsemen are gone away from the tribe. O Shiboob, said Antar, we are four of us, and we disregard numbers, great or small, for victory is from God, and by the faith of an Arab, no one shall enter the tents, but you and

I, for I am very desirous this time to see my uncle, whilst he is suffering these tortures; perhaps it may appease the fury in my heart. How can that be? said Shiboob, you have such a particular way with you, and I fear they may discover us, and then we shall be killed, and we shall spoil all our good luck. What say you, you base-born fellow? said Antar; were the tribe as numerous as the sands of the desert, I will not permit any one to touch you, not an old one or a young one; and if the alarm should be given, I will show you what you may remember in your heart for ever. If it must be so, said Shiboob, and you are resolved upon it, off then with these arms; and Shiboob put him on a disguise, and took him away to the haunt of lions, where they cut two bundles of wood, which might be of use to them in the adventure. Each took up a bundle and proceeded. It was almost dark when they entered the tents, through which they continued to pass, attentively observing every thing, till they came to the tents of Ramih, where they saw Malik, and his son in extreme misery, tied up with the dogs. Behold your uncle, said Shiboob, let your grief be now assuaged. Antar threw his bundle of wood off his head, and Shiboob did the same; but they did not stop till Ramih, who was the chief of the Jibhanians, came out, attended by a troop of slaves, who laid out a sofa for him to sit on. He then began to talk to his shepherds, who were parading before him his horses and his cattle: and he in-

quired of them about the pastures and the grain. O my lord, said one of the slaves, I beheld a most extraordinary sight this day; for whilst I was in the valley of meadows, tending the flocks, I came upon the high road, where, behold! was a knight hunting the fawns. He was mounted on a black steed, and in front of the knight was a man on foot girded with an Arabian bow, and round his waist was a quiver, full of arrows, and both were in pursuit of a fawn, endeavouring to catch it. I stopped to look at them, when lo! the man on foot outstripped the knight. He seized the fawn by the left horn, and the knight, catching it by its right horn, and gazing in its face, thus in poetry exclaimed:

"Depart, and, ever in the protection of God,
"may no evil e'er overtake thee! for thou resemblest
"my love in her eyes, and her beauty, so depart in
"security. Although thy form resembles the dam-
"sel, no imagination can comprehend the virtues
"of her mind."

As soon as the knight had finished his verses, my lord, he let the fawn go out of his hand, and it went off skipping over the barren waste, when soon two more knights joined them. And what is there so wonderful in all this? said Ramih; I suppose they are of the tribe of Cahtan, and that the evening has surprised them, and consequently they must repose in my land, and will quit it in the morning. Antar was much astonished at the fellow's having remembered his verses (for it was he and Shiboob who

had chased the fawn). But Ibla's father, Malik, having also overheard this account, was convinced the man on foot must be the dusky Shiboob, and the knight Antar, so he said to his son, Should this be my nephew, on his way to release us from these dreadful tortures, never will I again harbour evil against him, never will I again listen to his foes. It is long, that I am without news of my slave, that I sent to Locait, said Ramih, addressing his slaves and troops, that surrounded him, and I am very anxious to put these two Absians to death; I am quite tired of keeping them night and day. It will be as well to wait, said one of his cousins, till they come to enjoy the spectacle, so that they may not blame you. Now Malik and his son heard this discourse, and they felt sure of death and perdition; but Antar and Shiboob were standing without, each leaning against his bundle of wood, the night covering them with its obscurity. Ramih having terminated his discourse, arose to go to the tents, and as he went by Malik and his son, he stood over their heads, and beat them over their noses with a whip, saying, May God curse the family to which you belong, for you are full of perverseness and iniquity, fellows of little generosity and justice, ever celebrated for perfidy amongst men, and falsehood is your clothing. Then addressing Malik, he said, So thou art one of the Absian sheiks, and a black slave has a thousand times done thee kindness, and has rescued thy daughter from

captivity and disgrace, and he is Antar, son of Shedad; thou hast also taken from him a splendid dower in cattle, and hast affianced to him thy daughter; but thou hast ever lied: may God curse that hideous face of thine, and all thy infamous transactions! I will indeed cast thy flesh to the dogs, for thou art a lying sheikh: and Ramih went off to bed. Antar raised up the bundle of wood, and flung it on the fire; he drew his sharp scimitar, making towards the dwelling where was his uncle, Malik. Shiboob followed his example. The slaves, who had charge of Malik and his son, were three; they were stretched out in sleep. Antar put them to the sword, and not one of them stirred. Shiboob entered the habitation; he was like a great camel; he broke off the fetters from Malik and his son, saying, Take each of ye one of the swords of these slaves, and trot on before me, that my brother may defend ye with his sword, Dhami; be grateful for his deed, and don't be niggardly of his bride, Ibla. Accordingly, they did as he desired them, and hastened away. But Antar, the illustrious warrior; he stood near Ramih's tent, when lo! Ramih issued forth, alarmed by the noise. Antar smote him, and made his head fly from off his shoulders; then followed his brother, terrified on his account. The wood blazed, and the flames were furious, and the fire was extending among the tents. The dogs barked, and the warriors started forth, and they were all horror-struck; every one drew his sword,

eager to discover what was the matter. The night became bright as day, from the blaze of the fire, whilst Shiboob continued to urge on Malik and his son, and quickly passed through the tents. Antar followed them, wielding his sword. They proceeded into the desert, till terror fell on the inhabitants; when Antar, his uncle Malik, and Amroo, having mounted some of the scattered horses, Shiboob wished them to seek the haunt of lions, and escape from this terrible scene. But Oorwah and Harith joined them; for having heard the alarm, they determined to assist Antar, and accordingly brought his horse and his arms. He put on his breastplate and his girdle, he mounted his steed, and grasped his spear. Let us begone, said he, whilst they are occupied about the death of their chief.

And as they urged on their journey, Harith turned towards Malik to abuse him, saying, Who is like this noble lion, to whom every lion humbles himself or flies? How then could you hate and avoid him by flight? O Harith, cried Malik, I am a man whose eyes have been in a swoon, and those ever err whose errors are predestined by the God of old.

Malik dismounted, and, advancing towards Antar, humbled himself before him, saying, By the faith of a noble Arab, if I betray thee again, let me not be a man, and let me not be akin to the tribe of Abs and Adnan; for thou hast in this instance done a deed we never can forget, and thou hast resuscitated our lives after their extinction: comfort thy heart;

and let thy mind be at rest, for Ibla can suit no one but thee.

At hearing this, Antar's sorrows were relieved, and his afflictions were removed; he dismounted, and having embraced his uncle, they traversed the desert and the hills, till the obscurity was illumined, when lo! some Jibhanian horsemen overtook them. The cause of their arrival was, that when they heard the alarm, every one rushed out of his tent, inquiring what was the matter. The women told them what had happened to Ramih; so they re-entered their tents, and put on their arms, and galloped over the wilds; and amongst them was the knight of Jibhan, Abd Minah. He mounted with the other heroes, and sought the lands of Abs and Adnan, hastening over the wilds till they overtook Antar. O Ebe 'ool Ebyez, said Antar, perceiving that the horse had overtaken them, take my uncle, and his son, and Harith with you, and march over the desert whilst I keep off the foe. No, by thy life, Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah; we will not return but altogether; so also said Harith: but his uncle Malik, when he saw the troops making towards them with spears, and swords, was dreadfully alarmed; O Aboolfawaris, cried he, thou art our stay; 'tis thou must ward off from us peril after peril; on such a day as this I must remember thee.

Whilst they were thus talking, lo! another dust arose from the quarter of the tribe of Darem, and there appeared beneath it a troop of one hundred

horsemen, spear-armed, and headed by Locait, who was coming to assuage his heart in the murder of Malik and his son; and when they saw the Jibhanians, they raised their shouts till they came up with them, who acquainted Locait with what had happened to their Chief Ramih, and told them how Malik and his son had been released. This, said Locait, must be the act of that cunning Shiboob; for in the same manner he rescued Hatal, and then they plundered my property, and slew our slaves; but now they shall not escape me: attack them boldly, but do not despise them on account of their small number. Assault them with spears and swords, and particularly if Harith be with them. Thus he attacked with his men, and the desert was in commotion with the glitter of spear-barbs: they slackened their horses' bridles, whilst shouts and clamours arose. It was a frightful scene for Malik and his son; they both cried out in the name of Antar, and they were in a dreadful plight.

Antar was quite overjoyed, for he felt assured his uncle's perfidy was converted into sincerity; Which wouldst thou prefer, said he to Oorwah, their right or their left? or wouldst thou attack Locait? But Harith urged on his steed, and made against Locait, without noticing Antar, or speaking to him. Antar marked his actions, and followed him much delighted at his uncle's promises; and as he attacked, he thus burst out—

"Rancour has quitted my uncle's heart; it has

" vanished. When he saw what was just, he re-
" nounced his malice: my heart rejoices in his words;
" how should it not, when I see his actions? But
" if he falsifies his promise, I will deliver him over
" to Him who sees us, and who firmly rooted the
" mountains. Away with the man, who, whenever
" I humiliated myself to him, failed me, and grieved
" me. On the day of the thrust of the spear, I am
" to him the noblest of knights by my maternal and
" paternal uncle; but when he is safe with his fa-
" mily, I am the son of Zebeebah, the tender of
" camels. O sword, be thou the judge between us;
" when we are present in the battle, and when they
" fly, and when the spear-thrust exhausts the foe,
" tell them the messengers of death are here to mul-
" tiply the afflictions. What is passed, fate has de-
" termined; and he who fights obtains glory. I am
" the Antar of War in the day of contests; these are
" my acts in pure truth."

As Oorwah assaulted and heard his verses, he was amazed at his eloquence, as also were Malik, and his son, who thought it necessary to engage in company with him. Thus they attacked as the horsemen came upon them in every direction. The shouts mounted on high, and were loud; the brave became proverbial; the spear-barb drank of the blood of kidnies. Harith and Locait fought as no former tyrants ever fought; whilst Antar dispersed the horsemen over hill and dale, filling all hearts with fear and dismay.

At the close of the day Antar had diminished their numbers; and having left the Jibhanians stretched out on the rocks and stones, he turned to Harith, and saw him still with Locait, and the tribe of Darem, engaged in a furious contest of fierce spear-thrusts. They had slain his horse; he had fallen to the ground. Locait shouted, and rushed at him; but Antar, who saw this calamity, roared and assailed like a shower of rain, when it deluges; he sought Locait and Harith in the most determined manner, dispersing the horsemen with his well-tempered blade. Oorwah also rushed towards Locait, and pierced him with his spear, penetrating his thigh even to the horse's back, and halted near Harith, till he had mounted him on one of the scattered horses, and then attacked the remaining Daremites. Remove this disgrace from me, my cousins, and fly not, cried Locait; soon will I bind up my wound, and return to the contest, and I will not have it said we fled from only four men.

Upon that his horsemen resisted, and extended their long spears: it was an hour to them that would turn warriors grey. They continued in this state till the day fled, and the night came on with its veil of obscurity; then fled the horsemen of Darem, Antar setting them on fire with unremitted thrusts. None escaped but those whose deaths were postponed, or whose bodies bore marks of Antar's spear.

Locait wished to persist in the combat, but he was incapacitated by the anguish of his wounds: he was

safe personally, but in his heart was a raging flame at having suffered this disgrace from five horsemen.

Antar retired, the blood trickling from his sleeves; and his uncle could not cease praising him whilst he traversed the desert. But Antar was not tranquil or at ease till they came near to the land of Shoorebah and Mount Saadi, bearing with them immense property; for they had plundered every horde through which they had passed; and just as they were going to send on Shiboob before them to inform the tribe of their approach, lo! one of King Cais's slaves met them; O by the Arabs, he cried, how lucky to meet you on the road! Antar was startled: What more have you to say? he exclaimed. What has brought you here? O Aboolfawaris, said the slave, I am now in pursuit of you, for my lord Cais has been much agitated since your departure; the loss of you has distressed him. Your father told him you were gone to seek your uncle, but did not know whither you had directed your course. The King was greatly afflicted, and despatched slaves one after another, who returned all disappointed; but I set out last night—No more of this talk, said Antar; what news have you of my father Shedad, and of the family of Carad? O Aboolfawaris, replied the slave, the tribe of Abs is in the greatest trouble and tribulation, on account of the rise of dissensions, and the devastation of the country; for you, my lord, know that Hadifah is a most perfidious fellow; his head is full of absurdities, and he can-

not bear to see any one possessed of a he or a she camel, particularly whilst that Rebia is with him, instigating him with all his art and deceit: and now too there is between Hadifah and my Lord Cais a controversy and a wager about the speed of their horses, and the people are alarmed at death and misery.

Now it happened that when King Cais sent his slaves after Antar, one of them returned and said, My lord, as to Antar, I can hear nothing of him; but on my way home, I passed by the land of the tribe of Temeem, and I slept in the dwellings of a clan called the tribe of Riyah, where I saw a colt amongst the colts most remarkable for their beauty. It belonged to a man called Jabir, son of Awef: my eye never beheld the like of this colt, and never did I mark one of equal velocity in the race-course. Cais's heart was captivated at the account of this colt, and his anxiety was very great. Now this colt was one of the miracles of the age, and the most beautiful animal the noble Arabs had ever brought up. It was the most illustrious of all the Arab steeds in birth and pedigree, for its sire was called Ocab by the Arabs, and its dam Helwee, whose rapidity the lightning even envied. Nations were enraptured at her form, and the tribe of Riyah had long exulted among the Arabs on account of this mare and stallion. Now the sire of this colt was returning home with Jabir's daughter by the side of a lake (it was just then the time of meridian heat): it was there he

beheld the mare Helwee standing by her master's tent: he neighed, and burst his halter. The damsel was abashed, and let him go, and hastily took refuge in one of the tents out of her extreme modesty and bashfulness. There the stallion remained till the damsel again came forth, and caught him by the halter, and led him to the stable; but her father seeing her disorder, that could not be concealed, questioned her: so she told him what had passed. At this, the sparks flashed from his eyes, for he was an ill-conditioned fellow; and he immediately ran to the middle of the dwellings, and raising up his turban, cried out, O by Riyah, O by Riyah! and instantly the Arabs collected round him, to whom he related the whole affair, saying, My cousins, I will not leave the seed of my horse in the womb of Helwee, neither will I sell it for cattle or camels; and if they will not let me extract the fœtus out of her, I will commission some one to kill her. Come on, do what you please, they all cried; for we will not oppose you (now it was the custom of the Arabs to act after this manner in those days). So they brought him the mare, and tied her down before him; he sprung up, and turning up his sleeves to his shoulders, he brought a bowl of water, and wetting his hand in the water, he mixed up some clay, and thrust it up the mare's belly, with a view to destroy what was originally ordained by God to exist. But the mare became with foal without any harm, and the fellow returned, his passion being now cooled.

And there was only wanting a few days of the year when the mare brought forth a perfect colt; and as the owner of the mare beheld it, he was greatly pleased, and all his apprehensions were at an end. He called it Dahis (thruster), in allusion to what Jabir had done.

The colt turned out more beautiful than its sire, Ocab; broad-chested, long-necked, hard-hoofed, open-nostriled, its tail sweeping the ground, sweet-tempered, and, in short, the most extraordinary animal that ever was. They brought it up, and it increased in size for a long space of time, and it became like an arch of a palace, till one day its dam going out to the lake, followed by its colt, Jabir, the owner of Ocab, chanced to see it; he rushed towards it, and carried it off, leaving its dam to bewail its loss; and saying, at the same time, This is my colt, and I have a greater right to it than any one else.

The news soon reached its master, who immediately assembled the chiefs of his tribe, and after he had told them what had happened, they repaired to Jabir, and reproached him, saying, O Jabir, you had your will of your cousin's mare at first, and had your due, and we decided that point for you. But now you wish to seize his property and outrage him. No more talk, said Jabir, none of your abuse; for, by the faith of an Arab, I will not surrender it to him till you put me to death, or take it from me by force; and I will stir up a war against you. Now

the tribe was unwilling to excite dissensions. We like you too much for that, said they, on account of the kindred between us. We will not fight you for it, were it even an idol of gold. Now the owner of the mare and colt was called Kereem, son of Wahab, a man peculiarly famed for his liberality and generosity among the Arabs; and when he perceived Jabir's obstinacy, O my cousin, said he, as to the colt it is yours, and it belongs to you; and as to the mare, here she is before you, and let her be a present from me to you, in order that the colt and its dam may not be separated; and let me not appear a person capable of defrauding his cousin of his property. He then turned away, and made over the colt and its dam to Jabir. The tribe highly applauded his action; but Jabir was so abashed at his kindness to himself, that he returned the dam and colt back to him, and with them a handsome string of he and she camels. Dahis turned out a most perfect animal in every respect; and when his master wished to race him against another he rode him himself, and would say to his antagonist, Precede me an arrow's shot, that I may overtake you and pass you; and he not only came up with him, but outstripped him far; and to any one that saw him he appeared like an arrow in its most rapid flight, or a star sped with calamities. When Cais heard of this he was quite beside himself, and he could not sleep. He sent to its master, Kereem, saying, Sell me this colt for whatever you choose of gold and silver; that I may

send it you without delay, and there be no room for reproach. Kereem was highly incensed and indignant at this message. Cais must be a dolt or an ill-bred fellow, said he. What! does he suppose that I am a merchant to sell my horses, or that I am unable to ride this horse myself? By the faith of an Arab, had he sent to request Dahis, as a present, I would have sent it to him immediately, and with him a string of he and she camels; but in the way of traffic this can never be, were I even to be made to drink of death.

The messenger returned to Cais, and told him Kereem's answer, at which Cais was exceedingly enraged. Am I the King of the tribes of Abs and Adnan and Fazarah and Dibyan, said he, and shall a foul Arab presume to contradict me? And he called out to his men and warriors; instantly armour and coats of mail sparkled, swords and helmets glittered, the bold heroes mounted their hard-hoofed steeds, they slung on their spears, and set out for the land of the tribe of Riyah; and as soon as they came nigh they rushed upon the pastures in the morning, and carried off an immense quantity of cattle, which Cais surrendered to his noble cousins. After this he invaded the tents and dwellings, for the inhabitants were perfectly unprepared for any such catastrophe. Kereem also being absent on some military excursion with his men and chiefs, the Absians attacked the habitations, and captured the wives and daughters. Now Dahis was tied

amongst the tent ropes, for Kereem never rode him in battle, fearful of death, or some accident; and one of the slaves, who was in the dwellings, happening to perceive the invading host, went up to Dahis, intending to burst the heel-ropes by which he was tied; but he was totally unequal to that difficult task. However he mounted him, tied as he was, and struck his sides with his heels, and he flew away with the slave in the excess of his high spirit, and continued springing and skipping like a fawn till he reached the desert; and though the Absian horsemen galloped after him, they could not even overtake his dust. As soon as Cais saw Dahis, he recognized him, and his anxiety to possess him increased; he advanced towards his rider, whilst his regret was exceedingly violent, because he was aware that if he pursued him he should never succeed in his hopes, however eagerly he might follow him. The slave, being now at some distance from the Absians, dismounted from the horse, and having untied the heel-ropes from his feet, again mounted, King Cais still pursuing him; and when he came nigh, Stop, O Arab, he cried, you have my protection and security, by the faith of a noble Arab! At this the slave halted. Have you a mind to sell that horse? asked King Cais, for you have fallen on a purchaser the most wistful of all the Arab warriors. I will not sell him, my lord, said the Arab, but for the restitution of all this plunder; and it will reflect some honour on me that I shall have made him of so much value and con-

sequence. I will buy him, Arab, of you, added Cais, and here is my hand in confirmation of my engagement and bargain. The slave instantly agreed, and dismounting from the colt, delivered it over to King Cais, who mounted in the fulfilment of his hopes, ordering the Absians to restore the cattle they had taken; and they did so, not detaining even the value of a halter. Thus King Cais possessed himself of the horse, and being overjoyed at his success, returned home. As soon as they were established, Cais, out of his great fondness for Dahis, used to feed and rub him down with his own hands. And soon the account of Dahis reached the tribe of Fazarah; and in the heart of Rebia the flame of envy was kindled. Hadifah also was in a similar state, and they wished to contrive his death. My opinion, said Rebia, is that you have patience for some time, till Cais cool in his passion for him, for he is now completely devoted to the horse *.

* The race between Dahis, King Cais's horse, and Ghabra, Hadifah's mare, is historically true; in consequence of which a war was kindled between the two tribes, that lasted forty years: and it became a proverb amongst them; so that whenever a dispute was with difficulty allayed, they would say, the battle of Dahis and Ghabra is arisen.

It is also stated that Cais was the owner of both Dahis and Ghabra, and that Hadifah was possessed of two mares, which he ran against the former two. That Hadifah injured Dahis is also mentioned, and that Ghabra won the race; but that Hadifah, being unsatisfied, raised troubles and dissensions, which lasted for forty years.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

About that time Hadifah gave a grand feast, at which Carwash, King Cais's cousin, was present; and when they had eaten their dinner, and the cups of wine were circling round, the conversation turned upon the most famed chieftains of that period, till having exhausted that topic, they began talking of their celebrated steeds, and their races in the desert. O my cousin, said Carwash, there never has appeared such a horse as my cousin Cais's, Dahis: there can be no competitor for superiority, for he startles every one that looks at him; he is the antidote of grief to every one that beholds him, and he is a strong tower to any one that mounts him. Thus he continued to describe him in such glowing terms, that the hearts of the tribe of Fazarah, and the minds of the family of Zeead, were in agonies. Hear him, my brother, said Haml to Hadifah: this is quite enough, continued he, turning to Carwash, all that you have said about Dahis is stuff, all nonsense, for at this day there are not finer horses than mine or my brother's. Upon this, he ordered the slaves to parade the horses before Carwash, and they accordingly exhibited before him the horses of the family of Beder. Here, Carwash, said Haml,

look at this horse. It is not worth his dried fodder, said Carwash. They then paraded Hadifah's horses, amongst which was a mare called Ghabra, and a stallion called Marik. Look, Carwash, at these horses then, said Hadifah. They are not worth his dried fodder, repeated Carwash. Hadifah, very indignant at these expressions, exclaimed, What! not even Ghabra? Carwash. No, said Carwash, not Ghabra, nor all the horses on the face of the earth. Will you make a match for King Cais? said Hadifah. Yes, said Carwash, that Dahis will beat all the horses of the tribe of Fazarah, had he even on his back whole kintals of stones. They disputed, asserting, and contradicting each other, till said Hadifah, Well then, let the winner take as many he and she camels as he pleases. You will play me false, Hadifah, said Carwash, and I do not wish to take you in. I will not bet you more than twenty she camels, to be paid by the owner of the beaten horse; and thus the business was settled. Having finished the day in eating, they reposed that night; but early next day Carwash rode off, and sought the tribe of Abs, till coming to King Cais, he told him all about the bet. You have done wrong, O Carwash, said Cais. You might have betted with all the world, but Hadifah, for he is a very obstinate fellow, and full of shifts and pretexts. But if you have settled the bet, I must cancel it. Cais only waited till his company had quitted him, when he mounted his horse and repaired to the tribe of Fazarah, whom

he found seated in the midst of the dwellings, with their dinner before them. Cais dismounted; he bared his arms, and seated himself amongst them, and began eating their dinner, like a generous Arab. Cousin, said Hadifah, wishing to quiz him, what large mouthfuls you take; Heaven defend us from your voraciousness! I am indeed hungry, cousin, said Cais, but by Him of hereafter and heretofore, I am not here merely to eat your dinner, but I am come to dissolve the wager, which was made between you and my cousin Carwash. I request you will break the bargain, for every thing that happens over the bottle should be annulled and forgotten. Know then, Cais, said Hadifah, I will not be off the bet, except that I receive the he and she camels, and when you have produced them, it will be perfectly indifferent to me. However, if you wish, I will seize them by force, or if you like, I will renounce them by way of grace. Whatever Cais could say, over and over again, Hadifah still kept to one side of the question; and as Hadifah's brother only laughed at him, Cais was in a violent passion, as he said to Hadifah, (his face all flushed with rage) How much was the bet between you and my cousin? For twenty she camels, said Hadifah. As to the first bet, Hadifah, said Cais, I dissolve it, and I will lay you another, and let the wager be thirty. Forty, said Hadifah. Fifty, said Cais. Sixty, said Hadifah; and they continued rising till they made the bet a hundred she camels, and consigned the contract

into the hands of a man called Sabic, son of Wahab, whilst a crowd of old and young collected about them. What distance shall we run? said Hadifah to Cais. Forty arrow shots, said Cais; and we have an archer called Ayas, son of Mansoor, (for there was no Arab at that day could shoot like him, and the Arabs had made him quite a proverb). King Cais was anxious indeed for a longer race, on account of the strength of his horse's muscles, for the greater distance he went, the more his spirit and animation increased in his movements. Determine then, said Cais to Hadifah, when the match shall take place. Forty days, I think, said Hadifah, will be required to train the horses. Very well, said Cais; and the affair was mutually settled, that the horses should be trained forty days, and the race-ground should be near the lake of Zatulirsad; and the horse that should arrive first should be the winner. Cais having given his consent, he returned to the tents. Cousins, said one of the Fazarah horsemen to his neighbours, be assured dissensions will arise between the tribes of 'Abs and Fazarah, in consequence of this race between Dahis and Ghabra: the two tribes will be disunited, for King Cais is come in person, and he is a prince and the son of a prince. He has endeavoured to annul the bet with Hadifah, who would not consent, and this will be a business that will occasion a contention that will last nearly fifty years, and many will be destroyed in wars and battles. As to that, said Hadifah, I care not about

it, neither will I follow such advice. I will soon describe to you, O Hadifah, the end of this, your obstinacy with King Cais, said Ayas, and thus he addressed him:

"In thee, O Hadifah, there is no beauty, but in "the purity of Cais there is no stain; how pure is "his advice, and how becoming; but propriety is im- "planted in him. Bet then with some one who has "not in his possession even an ass, and whose father "owns not a horse. Give up Cais, for Cais has "wealth, and possessions, and horses, and a fiery "spirit, and moreover, that Dahis, who in the day "of the race is pre-eminent, when he moves or stands "still. He is a horse, when a night of dust sheds "its obscurity, you may see his hoofs like a fire- "brand."

O Ayas, said Hadifah, thinkst thou I will shrink from my word? I will have the camels from Cais, and I will not permit my name to be banded about as one incapable and beaten; let things have their course.

When King Cais reached the tents, he first ordered his slaves to train his horses, but to be most particular in their attention to Dahis; and then he related to his brother and his uncle Asyed what had passed between him and Hadifah. It was on that day Shibool arrived, and gave the news of Antar's return, to the great joy of King Cais. All the tribe of Abs went out to meet him, and saluted him. King Cais took him by his side, and received him most honour-

ably, and conversing with him, asked him what had occurred during his excursion. Antar related every circumstance concerning his uncle Malik; how he had rescued him from punishment, and released him from the dogs; and, in reply to Antar's inquiry about the horse-race, Cais repeated what had occurred between him and Hadifah. O king, said Antar, calm your heart and brighten your eye, run the race and fear not; for, by the faith of an Arab, if Hadifah moves or excites any disturbance, I will kill him, and I will kill the whole tribe of Fazarah. Thus they continued, till they reached the tents, but before Antar would enter the tent of his cousin, Ibla, he went to look at Dahis, and walked all round him, and saw that he was the wonder of the world in qualities that astonished every one; and Antar having comforted Cais's heart, went home. By the faith of an Arab, said Harith, it would be better to renounce this business than to persist in it, (Harith was related to the tribe of Fazarah, and he was afraid that Antar would bring down upon them a violent death.) Antar reposed that night in his tents, but the next day came Sinan, son of Ebe Harithah, to King Cais, from King Numan, and the cause of Sinan's coming was Hadifah's messenger, who reached Numan, and told him that Harith was with King Cais and Antar, Who are resolved, said he, to protect him against you and Chosroe Nushirvan, and all the inhabitants of the wilds and wastes. I cannot imagine, said Numan, that my brother-in-law

of the tribe of Abs will protect the murderer of my son; and he immediately ordered Sinan to repair to King Cais and Antar, and to demand Harith of them. Sinan accordingly departed for the land of Abs and Adnan, and arriving on that day he proceeded to King Cais, and told him he was come to demand Harith; For it is reported, said he, that you have given him an asylum. King Numan has sent me to you, saying to me, If Harith is with King Cais, tell him to surrender him to you, and do you bring him to me. Now I am his surety, and you know the consequences. Cais was much troubled. I know, O Sinan, said he, you are an old sheikh, and many persons submit to your opinions. You have learnt that Harith has slain my father's murderer, Khalid, son of Giafer, and for our sakes he has exposed his life, and when he fell into King Numan's power, my sister rescued him from death. She sent him to us, knowing well that we should protect him. We will not surrender him to any Arab of the wilderness: had he come to us, when we were sufficiently secure in our tents, perhaps we had driven him away from our tribe; but as a consummation of good fortune, he met our prisoners with the tribe of Aamir, and rescued them with his sharp sword, and he has behaved generously towards us, first and last; we cannot therefore dismiss him from our protection, were even our heads to fly off before him. The man is under our protection, and neither King Numan, nor Chosroe Nushirvan, shall have any

authority over him; not a hair of his head will we deliver up, till after the blows of the thin-edged scimitar, or the thrust of the well-proportioned spear; let Numan be pleased or angry, just as he likes. They were thus conversing, when lo! Antar came in, brandishing his sword Dhami, for he had heard of Sinan's arrival. As he entered, he did not salute or speak, but turning upon Sinan, Thou despicable sheikh! he cried, thou artful dog! art thou he that is come from King Numan? Were I not in the presence of this king, I would make thee drink of thy death. Avaunt! begone! away to him who sent thee! tell him from me that I have protected Harith, neither will I deliver him to an Arab or a Persian; and if Numan sends us another messenger, he shall not return from me but degraded and repentant. Sinan arose, and was struck with horror; he was confounded and bewildered; he immediately departed, and in his heart was an unquenchable flame, and an unappeasable fire against Antar. In the meantime, Hadifah had heard of Antar's return, and that he had encouraged Cais to the race. O my brother, said Haml, I fear, should Antar fall on me, or one of the family of Beder, he will kill him, and we shall be dishonoured. Annul the race, or we shall be annihilated. Let me go to King Cais, and I will not quit him, till I persuade him to come to you to request the bargain may be broken, and his perverseness be satisfied. Do as you please, said Hadifah. Accordingly, Haml mounted his horse, and

immediately went to King Cais, without asking any permission, and there he found his uncle Asyed, who was a wise and sensible man. Haml saluted him and kissed his hand, and exhibiting great interest about Cais, O my cousin, said he, know that my brother Hadifah is but an ill-conditioned fellow, and full of intrigue. I have been these three days abusing him, in order to induce him to abandon the wager. Well, said he, at last, if Cais again returns to me, and wishes to be off the bargain, I will annul it; but let not the Arabs hear that I abandoned the bet in fear of Antar. Now you know, my cousin, that to forbear with cousins is the greatest of kindnesses, so I am come to request that you will go with me to my brother Hadifah and ask him to give up the race, before any disturbances arise, and the tribe be driven away from its native land. At hearing Haml's discourse, Cais was abashed; for he was easily persuaded, and was of a noble birth and origin: he immediately started up, and leaving his uncle Asyed in his place, he accompanied Haml to the country of Fazarah, and when they were half-way between the two hordes, Haml went ahead of Cais, whom he thus praised; at the same time blaming his brother Hadifah, in these lines:

"O Cais, be not incensed against Hadifah, for
"he is a vile obstinate fellow, and iniquitous in his
"deeds. O Cais, if you pertinaciously persist in
"this wager, destruction will be its result, and its
"consequences will be fatal. I fear that my brother,

" for his foul deeds, will suffer what the youth " Kelthoom suffered, who raised his brother to high " honours; but he swerved from propriety, and " became a rebel, and his power was annihilated. " O Cais, both you and Hadifah are high-spirited, " and on that account I am in great affliction for " you. Renounce all private interest, be kind and " generous, before the oppressor becomes the op- " pressed."

Haml continued abusing his brother, and admiring Cais, till they reached the tribe of Fazarah by evening, where they saw Hadifah and the chieftains assembled together. Cais saluted them, and throwing his eyes round, saw Sinan seated by Hadifah's side. He disguised his feelings, and exclaimed, O Sinan, return, if thou wouldst exert thyself in the cause of peace and friendship, and the preservation of the blood of noble horsemen. O King, said Sinan, I am paralysed on that point; by the faith of an Arab, I cannot possibly redeem my life from death, for you know that I am Harith's surety with Numan, and as I cannot return, I have sent my comrades to acquaint him with my situation, and in the mean time I am come hither to seek an asylum till you and your brother-in-law Numan decide on your future movements.

Now this speech of Sinan's was all dissimulation and deceit; and he only came to the tribe of Fazarah to embroil the two tribes, and to work their mutual destruction; for when the scene between him

and Antar was over, Sinan rushed out quite stupefied. Away, said he to his companions, away to King Numan, and tell him all you have heard from the black Antar, that contemptible fellow; and desire him to send intrepid armies against the Absians, to root out every vestige of them. As to me, I will repair to the tribe of Fazarah, to plot the death of Antar, and the Absians, that I may extirpate them, and knock down their boundary marks.

His companions hastened to King Numan, but Sinan reached the tribe of Fazarah, and Hadifah received him with great distinction, asking the cause of his arrival. I am come, said he, to carry away Harith from King Cais; but Antar has said to me so and so: I have therefore sent to Numan to tell him what Antar has said, and what Cais has done. In the mean time I am come to you, and I cannot possibly think of returning home till I have contrived the destruction of Antar and Cais, and not left a man of them alive. Hadifah told Sinan all about the horse-race; and I have just sent Haml, he added, to King Cais, and it was my intention to make peace; but now that you have imparted this to me, I will never give my consent to any accommodation: and just at that moment arrived Cais and Haml.

Hadifah, as soon as he saw Cais, resolved to overwhelm him with shame, as Sinan had recommended. As to thee, said he to his brother, pray who ordered thee to go to this man? By the faith of a noble

Arab, were every human being on the face of the earth to importune me, and should say to me—O Hadifah, do but relinquish one hair of these camels, I would not relinquish it till after the sword-blow that cleaves, and the spear-thrust that penetrates. Cais blushed, and remounted his horse, reproaching Haml for his conduct. The night was now advancing, when Cais, convinced that this affair was entirely owing to Sinan, thus spoke his rebuke:

"In truth I abhorred the horse-race, fearful of "outrage; but my adversary is stanch to his bar-"gain: I said gently, Hadifah, abandon it, and "hear what I in my clemency say. But he was "violent; and as he saw me become milder, he be-"came still more outrageous. Such intemperate "acts are iniquitous: they insulted me when they "saw me gentle, and I am called a great coward. "As to me, by Him to whom belong the pillar, and "the shrine, and Zemzem, and the wall, I have "that resolution in me, that will put to flight the "calamities of fortune, when they are even destined "by fate; and I have heroes that will meet the rush "of death with hearts incorporated in their whole "frames. O family of Bedr, although power con-"sists in command and prohibition, by my life, it "cannot last long: but he who has advised you this "day has erred, and over him will hover the birds "of death."

King Cais applied the latter lines to Sinan; he then proceeded till he reached home, where he found

his uncles and brothers sitting in anxious expectation of him, and in a state of the greatest inquietude. O my son, said his uncle Asyed as soon as he saw him, thou hast done a foolish deed, for thou hast degraded thyself. Had it not been for Sinan, said Cais, I should have accommodated the business; but now there is nothing for it but the race and the wager. He then communicated to them that Sinan had taken refuge with the tribe of Fazarah, and had engaged to aid them with his advice and contrivances. They were amazed, and repented of having let him escape out of their hands.

King Cais reposed that night, and as he was fixed in the determination about the race, he trained his horse for forty entire days. The Arabs of that country had engaged to each other to come to the pastures to see the race; and when the forty days had expired, the horsemen of the two tribes assembled, and flocked to the lake of Zat-ul-irsad; and also Ayas the archer was there, who, turning his back upon the lake, to which the horses were to run, and moving himself towards the north, shot his hundred shots with his arrows, till he finished at a well-known spot. Soon arrived the horsemen of Ghiftan and Dibyan, for they were of one country, and between them were kindred and relationship, and all were called the tribe of Adnan. Cais had recommended Antar not to be present, he was so afraid of the occurrence of dissensions. Antar listened, but he could not stay quiet; and being

alarmed for King Cais on account of those dastardly Fazareans, who might betray him, he mounted Abjer. He girded on his sword Dhami, and taking Shiboob by his side, he joined the multitude in his fears for King Zoheir's sons; and when they approached, they saw him like a mailed lion; his sword was drawn in his hand, and his eyes were throwing out red burning coals.

As they all halted, they continued to look at him, till he being in the midst of them, cried out in a tremendous voice, Eh! noble Arab Chiefs, and illustrious men here present—ye know, that I am the favoured man of King Zoheir, father of King Cais, and that I am the slave of his munificence; it was he who admitted me to rank and kindred, and caused me to be numbered amongst the Arab chiefs; but though he did not survive, that I might repay him for his kindnesses, and make the kings of the earth subservient to him, he has left his Absian son as his heir, whom his other brothers have acknowledged, and have placed in the seat of his father, on account of his good sense and uprightness, correct judgment, and high rank; I am his slave, his property, the succour of him who loves him, the enemy of him who opposes him: never shall it be said whilst I am alive, that I ever saw him debased by a foe. As to this match, to which he has graciously given his consent, it is incumbent on us to aid him in all his wishes; so there is nothing more to be done but to let the horses go. Victory is from

the Creator of day and night; and I swear by the sacred Shrine, by Zemzem, and the temple, and the eternal God, who never neglects his servants, and who never sleeps, that if Hadifah commits any act of violence or oppression, I will make him drink of death and vengeance; I will make the whole tribe of Fazarah a fable amongst mankind: and, O Arab Chiefs, if you really desire the race, be impartial; otherwise, by the eyes of Ibla, I will make the horses plunge through blood. Antar is right, cried out the horsemen in every direction.

Upon this, Hadifah selected for his mare Ghabra a jockey from the tribe of Dibyan, one who had spent all his life in bringing up horses, and had even passed the obscurity of night in that occupation. But Cais chose for his horse, Dahis, from the tribe of Abs, a jockey more expert and scientific than the Dibyanian; and when each was mounted on his respective horse, Cais gave this recommendation to the Absian jockey:

"Give him not the rein entirely; if the sweat "and moisture burst out on him, wipe him with "your legs, and gently press against his loins; but "if you push him too hard you will distress him."

Hadifah heard what Cais had said, and he also wished to imitate him, so he gave his recommendation to his jockey, as follows:

"Give her not the rein entirely; if the sweat "and moisture burst out on her, wipe her with

" your legs, and gently press against her loins; but " if you push her too hard you will distress her."

Antar laughed. By the faith of an Arab, said he, you are beaten. O Ebe Hidjar, expressions in poetry are not so deficient, and the application of verses is not so obliterated, that you should speak just as Cais spoke. Cais, however, is a king, and the son of a king, and he must always be imitated; and your following him in your speech is a proof that your horse will follow his over the desert.

On hearing this, Hadifah's wrath and indignation were roused, and he swore an oath that he would not run his horse that day; and would not race till the morrow by sunrise. Hadifah only desired that delay, in order that he might in his perfidy contrive some vile scheme; for when he saw Dahis, he was amazed at his form, and the beauty of his points.

The judges dismounted, and the Arab horsemen were about to return home, when lo! Shiboob cried out in a loud voice, O tribes of Abs, and Adnan, and Fazarah, and Dibyan, and ye all that are here present, wait for me a little, and hear words that shall be recorded from generation to generation. All the warriors halted: Speak, O Ebe Reah, said they, what is it? Perhaps there may be some good in thy words. O illustrious Arabs, said Shiboob, ye have heard what has passed about the match between Dahis and Ghabra; and I will stake my existence that I will beat both the horses, were each

of them to fly with wings, but upon this condition, if I beat I will take the hundred camels that are agreed upon; but if I am beaten I will give fifty camels. On this, one of the Sheikhs of Fazarah exclaimed, What's this, thou vile slave, that thou sayest? Why, if thou winnest, shouldst thou take a hundred camels, and if thou art beaten, shouldst thou only give fifty? Eh! you he-goat of a fellow, you dung-born, said Shiboob, I only run on two legs, and a horse runs on four, and he has a tail to boot. So all the Arabs laughed, much amazed at the conditions he made, and as they wished very much to see him run, they assented to the perilous undertaking.

But when they had returned to their tents, said Antar to Shiboob, Eh! thou son of an accursed mother, how canst thou beat these two horses, for whom the horsemen of the tribes have assembled, and say that in this age there are not their equals in the race, not a bird that can overtake them? By the truth of Him who produced springs from the rock, and who knows what is to be before it is, replied Shiboob, I will outstrip the two horses were each of them to fly with wings. Ay, thou black born, and much benefit will come of it, for when the Arabs hear of this circumstance, they will never again attempt to follow me when I run away over the deserts. Antar smiled, for he knew what was in his mind. Shiboob then returned to King Cais, and his brothers, and all the spectators, and engaged

on his existence that he would outstrip the two horses. All present were witnesses to his sayings; and they then separated in the greatest astonishment at his determination.

But as to the treacherous, perfidious Hadifah, when evening came on he sent for one of his slaves, called Damis, who was a great bully. O Damis, said Hadifah, you are ever talking of your dexterity, but hitherto I have never had occasion for you. My lord, said Damis, say what you want, that I may exert myself in the execution of your business. What I want of you is to go to the great defile, said Hadifah: remain there, and conceal yourself till morning. Mark well the horses, and see if Dahis comes by first; if so, bolt at him, strike him over the face, and make him start back. Let Ghabra run ahead of him that we may not incur the disgrace of being beaten; for when I saw Dahis, his appearance created doubts, and I fear he will beat my mare Ghabra, and outstrip her in the desert, and I become a derision among the Arabs. But how, my lord, shall I distinguish Dahis from Ghabra, when they both advance beneath the dust? I will assist you in some measure on their respective standards, he replied. Hadifah collected a number of stones, as many as were necessary to make him comprehend the standards. Take these pebbles, said he, and as soon as the sun shines begin to count them, and throw them on the ground in fours; when you have cast away two-thirds or three-

fourths of them it will be Ghabra, for this is her standard to that spot. If you see her advancing, let her pass, and do not oppose her; but if you have only thrown away one-fourth, or one-third, or less than that, then Dahis will be the first—rush out, strike him with a stone across the face, and drive him back on the desert, and let my mare Ghabra run ahead of him. The slave assented, and taking the pebbles went to the defile, where he concealed himself, and Hadifah felt assured of being the winner.

When the day dawned, the Arabs being collected from every quarter, were huddled together in one mass; the judges let go the horses, and their jockeys gave a loud shout; they started forth like lightning, when it blasts the sight with its flash, or a gust of wind, when it becomes a hurricane in its course. Ghabra shot ahead of Dahis, and left him behind her over the desert. Thou art thrown out, my brother of the tribe of Abs, cried the Fazarean, to the Absian, so comfort thyself in thy grief and distress. Thou liest, retorted the Absian; in a short time thou wilt see on whom the disappointment will fall: wait till we have passed these shingles; mares work better in such troublesome places than on plains and level grounds. When they came to the mead, Dahis launched forward like a giant when he stretches himself out, and he left his dust behind. He appeared as if without legs or feet, and in a twinkling of an eye he was ahead of Ghabra. Then,

cried the Absian to the Fazarean, send a messenger by me to the family of Bedr, and do you taste of the bitterness of patience in my rear. Shiboob all the while kept ahead of Dahis, like the northern blast, and he skipped along like a fawn, and rushed with the violence of a male ostrich, till he came nigh to the defile, where Damis was concealed. Damis had cast away of the pebbles less than a quarter. He stretched out his eyes, and saw Dahis advancing. Damis waited till the horse came up to him, when he shouted at him, and springing at him, struck him a severe blow with a stone over the eyes. The horse started back, and staggered; the rider nearly fell off; but as soon as Shiboob saw this, and spied out the subtle slave, he knew that he belonged to the base-born Hadifah. In the excess of his fury he rushed at him, and in haste drew his dagger, and striking the slave Damis, ripped out his entrails, and exterminated his existence. He then wanted to return to Dahis and coax him, when lo! up came Ghabra, like a gust of wind, tearing over the wide desert. Shiboob was afraid of being beaten, and that the camels would be taken from him, so he returned, and playing away with his feet made towards the lake, where he arrived first by two arrow-shot. Ghabra came on his heels, and Dahis came in last, bearing the marks of the blow between his eyes, and the tears were streaming down his cheeks. The spectators were amazed at Shiboob's activity, and the power of his muscles; but as soon as

Ghabra advanced, arose the shouts of the Fazareans, and when Dahis came up in that state, the jockey informed the tribe of Abs what the slave had done. Cais saw the effects of the blow on the face of Dahis, and heard all the circumstances. Antar bellowed; he dashed his hand on his resistless Dhami; he roared out in a tremendous voice; he longed to put the tribe of Fazarah to death; but the Sheikhs prevented him—so he had patience—they went to Hadifah, abusing him and reviling him, for his infamous transaction. He denied it, and perjured himself with false oaths, swearing, he knew nothing about the blow Dahis received, and said, I demand my due; I will not relinquish my bet; I will not admit of this paltry excuse. This blow cannot but be of bad omen to the tribe of Fazarah, said Cais; God will truly grant us victory and triumph, and we must positively root out every vestige of them; for Hadifah only desired the race in order to produce troubles and dissensions, and that war and commotion might fall upon the tribes, that men might be killed, and children be orphaned. The conversation grew more violent, shouts arose in all directions, and the polished swords were drawn; the cries of the warriors were loud, and there only remained the rush to arms. Upon this, the Sheikhs and the wise men dismounted, and uncovering their heads, they penetrated the crowds, and humiliating themselves, they settled the business in the best possible manner, That Shiboob should take the hundred camels from

the tribe of Fazarah, the amount of the wager, and that Hadifah should abandon all further controversy and dispute; thus endeavouring to extinguish animosity, and to stop the rising tumults, and to calm the differences among the tribes. Then the families retired home, and in their hearts was as much of rancour as filled their bosoms; but it was Hadifah whose resentment was the most vehement, and whose hatred and perfidy were the most virulent, particularly when he heard of the death of his slave Damis. As to King Cais, also, his heart was replete with passion, and rooted grudge, whilst Antar comforted him, saying, O king, distress not your heart, for, by the tomb of King Zoheir, I will bring down infamy and disgrace on Hadifah; it has been on your account I have hitherto respected him. And thus they dispersed to their tents. In the meantime, Shiboob, as soon as day dawned, slaughtered twenty of the camels he had taken, and distributed them to the widows and the maimed. Another twenty also he slew, and made with them a magnificent feast, and entertained the slaves and handmaidens of the tribe of Abs. The next day he slaughtered the remainder, and made a grand dinner at the lake of Zat-ul-irsad, to which he invited the sons of King Zoheir, and the noble chieftains. When they finished eating, the cups of wine went round, and they all approved Shiboob's conduct. Now what Shiboob had done soon reached the tribe of Fazarah; how he had slaughtered the camels, and feasted the

illustrious Absians. So the fools of the tribe assembled round Hadifah. O Ebe Hijar, said they, we came in first, and the slave of those impostors has eaten our camels; send to Cais and demand your due, and if he sends the camels to you, 'tis well; if not, let us raise a roaring war against the Absians. Hadifah raised his head to his son Ebe Firacah: O my son, said he, instantly ride to Cais, and say to him, My father says, you must instantly pay him his bet, and then you will be generous, otherwise he will take it from you by force, and then you will be overwhelmed with affliction. At that time, one of the chief Sheikhs was present, and when he saw Hadifah resolved on sending his son to Cais, Eh! O Ebe Hijar, said he, art thou not ashamed to send such a message to the tribe of Abs? They are thy cousins: is this in conformity to reason, or the extinction of dissensions? Never mention such people, but to pardon and to do good. My opinion is, thou shouldst abstain from this obstinacy, for it will be repaid by extirpation, and the dust of war. Cais has been impartial, and has done no outrage; and as to the horsemen of Abs, make peace with them; it is more consistent with thy dignity. Mark thy slave Damis; he struck Dahis, the horse of King Cais, but how speedily God punished him, and left him dyed in his black blood. I have advised thee to listen to wholesome counsel; act worthily, and renounce such foul proceedings. After this, thou art aware of thy situation, and now look after thine own affairs. Hadifah was furious

at these words: Thou despicable Sheikh, thou false dog, he cried, shall I be afraid of Cais, and all the whole tribe of Abs? By the faith of an Arab, men of trust and honour, if Cais send not the camels, I will not leave him a tent standing. The Sheikh was greatly vexed, and to alarm him, thus said:

"Outrage is base, O Ebe Hijar, for it springs "unawares, like the watchful night wanderers; be- "ware of its blows when swords are drawn: be just, "and clothe thyself not in infamy. Ask the well- "informed of Themood, and his tribe, when they "rebelled and committed acts of tyranny, he would "tell thee, how an order from the God on high "destroyed them in one night; he destroyed them "in one night, and in the morning they were laid "low, with their eyes fixed upwards."

Hadifah, totally disregarding the Sheikh, and his verses, not only cursed him, but ordering his son, Away to Cais, said he; and thus departed Ebe Firacah for the land of Abs; and when he arrived, he entered the dwellings of King Çais, where, not finding him at home, he asked his wife Modelilah, Rebia's daughter, about him. What dost thou want of him? said she. I demand of him our due and our wager, replied he. Alas! for thee and thy due! son of Bedr, replied she, dost thou not fear such perfidy? Were Cais at home, he would despatch thee to the tombs. Ebe Firacah returned, and told his father what his wife had said. Hey! thou foul coward, said Hadifah, hast thou returned, thy

business unfinished, and frightened by the daughter of Rebia? Go back. It is now evening, said his son, let this be to-morrow's deed; and he slept that night in his tents, to take leave of his father and uncles. As to King Cais, when he came home, his wife informed him of the arrival of Ebe Firacah to demand the camels. By the faith of an Arab, said Cais, had I been present, I would have killed him; but it is over—let it pass. That night Cais passed in grief and sorrow, till the day dawned, when being seated in his pavilion, Antar came to him: he sprang up, and placing him by his side, told him all about Hadifah. And he has had the impudence to demand of us the he and she camels! continued Cais; but had I been at home, I would have slain him. Cais had not finished his speech, when Ebe Firacah stood before him. He neither made any salutation nor previous address; but said, O Cais, my father desires you to send him his due, and then you are generous; otherwise, he will mount against you, and take them by force from you, and then you will be overwhelmed with affliction. On hearing such words, the light became darkness in the eyes of King Cais: he snatched up a winged javelin; Thou son of a base cuckold, said he, how is it thou art not more civil in thy speech, when in the presence of one like me? and he smote him with the javelin through the chest, and it issued through his back, and as he was falling off the horse, Antar caught him, and lashing him on, he turned the horse's head towards the quarter

of Fazarah, and struck him with his whip over the flanks. The horse returned to his pastures till he reached his stable; and he was floating in blood. The shepherds carried him away to the tents; crying out, O misery! O woe!

A flame was kindled in the heart of Hadifah; he smote his bosom, and was in the greatest consternation, exclaiming, O tribe of Fazarah, to arms! to arms! So the foolish ones assembled round Hadifah, and said, Arise with us against the tribe of Abs; let us retaliate on them. O my cousins, said he, lay not down this night but under arms. It was Sinan who urged on the absurd party of the Fazarah tribe; for it was his purpose to excite dissensions among the tribes; he also smote his bosom, and cut himself over the chin, as he cried out to the tribe of Fazarah, Vengeance! Vengeance on the tribe of Abs! leave them not a tent to live in.

The tribe of Fazarah reposed that night, having prepared all their implements of war and battle. By break of day Hadifah was mounted; the warriors were ready, and they left no one in the tents but the children, and those who had not the force to fight. Rebia was amongst those left behind, he and his brothers, saying, I will not war against my family. I will not be for them or against them. As to King Cais, after he had put Ebe Firacah to death, he was aware the Fazarah tribe would seek him with their warriors; so he also made preparations for battle: and as it was Antar who arranged

all King Cais's affairs, and put every thing in proper train; he mounted with the Carad heroes, and the Absians were immersed in armour and brilliant coats of mail. They made ready for the contest, leaving no one in the tents but the women, and those who were unable to stand. And amongst those left behind was Harith, who said, I will not engage the tribe of Fazarah, for they are my relations. This was a dreadful event for the two parties. They marched out against each other, and the sun had not risen when the dust flew on high, and the lightning of the scimitars flashed, and the whole region was convulsed; the light of day was obscured.

Antar was resolved to start forth and appease his heart, when lo! Hadifah came forward arrayed in sable robes, his heart and soul ulcerated with grief on account of his son. Son of Zoheir, he cried, it was not well to slay an infant; but it is well to issue forth into the scene of battle, that it may be decided by the contest of spears who deserves dominion, you or I. At this King Cais was vexed; he rushed from beneath the standards, resentment overpowering every feeling; he sprang at Hadifah. Urged on by the rancour they entertained against each other, they charged on their noble steeds till the day became black in their eyes. Cais was mounted on Dahis, and Hadifah on Ghabra. In the contest between them there past things unseen before; each tribe despaired of its master, and they resolved on the attack to assist them, that the vehe-

mence of the combat might be diminished. Just then intense were the shouts; the cries arose on high; scimitars were drawn; the spears were extended between the ears of the Arab chargers. Antar advanced towards Oorwah and his father Shedad; Attack with me these dastards, said he, and make to their right with the unsheathed swords, that we may send it rolling against their left. At that moment the elders of the two tribes came forward, and stood in the centre of the plain, their heads uncovered, their feet bare, and over their shoulders hung the idols. They presented themselves before the two armies (the horsemen were alarmed for the results), and thus they addressed them; O my cousins, by all the union of kindred between us, make us not a proverb against the ordinances of God's slaves: let not our enemies and our enviers have cause to reproach us; relinquish this controversy and dissension; widow not the women; orphan not the children; be satisfied with the blood that is against you among the Arabs; humble yourselves to the Absians, your cousins. We ask of you, how many nations before you has outrage annihilated! how many tribes have plunged into evils and calamities, but have soon repented of their impious deeds! how many men have swerved from propriety, and have stumbled into the pits of anguish and regret! Wait then for the destined hour of death; expect the day of dissolution; for it is at hand. Ye will be lacerated by the hovering eagles

of destruction, and you will be consigned to the gloomy recesses of the grave; then let there be no record but of your virtues when your carcasses become extinct. The Sheikhs did not desist from their harangue till that burning flame was quenched, and the passions of these resolute heroes were tranquillized. Hadifah retired from the contest; and it was decided that Cais should pay Ebe Firacah's price of blood with a great quantity of cattle, and a string of he and she camels. Neither did the Sheikhs quit the field of battle till Hadifah embraced Cais, and acquiesced in this arrangement. Antar roared and bellowed, O king, said he to Cais, what is this deed? What! shall the tribe of Fazarah take from us the price of blood for one slain, and the sword of our resolution thus brilliant? Shall our prisoners be ransomed but by the barbs of the spears? Shall the blood of our dead be shed unrevenged? Hadifah's rage increased: Eh, thou bastard! said he; thou son of a foul mother! What is it that honours thee or disgraces us? Were I not ashamed of these noble Sheikhs, I should have annihilated thy numbers by this time: I should have left thy women widows and thy children orphans. Hadifah's resentment then being inflamed, By the faith of an Arab, said he to the Sheikhs, who had exerted themselves in restoring harmony, I will hear no more of peace, were the foe even to plunder me with the points of their spears. Do not so, son of my mother, said Haml to his brother; ride not over the road of

folly; abandon such loathsome ways; be at peace with our cousins, for they are the firebrands of the zealous Arabs; their brilliant stars, and their dazzling suns. It was but the other day you outraged them, and ordered your slave to strike their horse, that it might fail and swerve from the direct road. As to your son, he was justly slain, for you sent to demand what was not your due. After this there is nothing so recommendable as peace; and he who seeks war is a tyrant and an oppressor. Accept the compensation and be tranquil, or else you will open upon us a flame that will burn us in the fire of hell, and thus he recited:

"By the truth of Him who firmly rooted the "mountains without a foundation, if you do not "accept the compensation of the Absians you are "deceived. They call Hadifah chief; be thou a "chief, and be satisfied with cattle and wealth. "Quit the horse of outrage; ride it not; it will "conduct you to a sea of sorrow and affliction. "Hadifah, renounce violence like a liberal man, "and particularly the battle against the horsemen "of Abs. Make them a strong tower for us when "the foe charges us, in the Absian superiority. "Make them to be of the number of our friends, "for they are of the noblest resolution, and Absians. "And if Cais has acted oppressively, it was you "who taught him treachery a few days ago."

When Haml had concluded, the chiefs of the tribes thanked him, and Hadifah having agreed to

take the compensation, they restrained him from acts of violence and hostilities: The warriors returned home, and every thing was calmed between them. Cais sent to Hadifah two hundred she camels, ten slaves, and ten female slaves, ten head of horse; and after this all was restored to peace, and the people remained quiet in their country.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Some days after, Antar rode out in company with Harith and Prince Malik to the chase; and as they wandered far over the desert in search of game, they drove the wild beasts over the wastes, till the heat overpowering them, they returned to the valley of Ghadha, where was a party of Arabs established, called the tribe of Ghorab. Antar and his comrades drank at their wells, and whilst watering their horses, they observed a Sheikh, who was very infirm from the number of years he had lived; with him also was a young girl, like the thirsty fawn, in shape resembling the branch of the tamarisk. As soon as Prince Malik beheld her, he was bewildered, and a violent flame was roused in his bosom. He instantly turned towards her father, and saluting him, inquired after his health, saying, O Sheikh, what is this damsel to thee? My daughter, he replied, and of all my family and tribe she alone remains to me. She assists me in milking in the desert, and helps me as thou seest. Wilt thou consent, said the prince, that I become her husband, that I may make thee lord of all I possess in cattle and sheep, and I will remove thy poverty and thy

distresses from thee? The Sheikh smiled, and said, How can that be? My lord, I am but a poor man, and thou art a great prince. Speak not so, added Malik; think not, O Sheikh, it is wealth that adorns the man; lineage and birth are far better than property and worldly acquisitions. Whilst they were thus conversing, up came Antar and Harith, and asked Malik what was the matter? So he related his adventure, and complained to Antar of the agonies of love, saying, O Aboolfawaris, I used to accuse thee of folly when thou didst complain of thy passion, and I used to say love was only a phrensy till I tasted it myself, and beheld those eyes; but as soon as I felt it, I knew that in forbearance you must be the most patient of men, and the firmest against grief and affliction. Antar laughed, and perceiving that love had worked a change in his mind, O my lord, said he, if in less than an hour all this has been effected in you, in what a state must he be who for years has been seeking consolation, and has found none? Rejoice, said Antar, to the old man, at the departure of sorrow and poverty, and in thy future happiness. Marry thy daughter to this prince, that thou mayest become lord of the tribe of Ghorab, and ruler over its elders and youths. It all appears to me like a dream, said the man; there is nothing to be done but to accept her as a gift from me, without any fixed settlement, or calculated dower—that indeed is quite beyond my powers. When I am married to thy daughter, said

Malik, the Arabs shall see how I will requite thee. So he took his hand for the nuptials, and he succeeded in all his wishes.

Malik returned quite bird-hearted, and Antar congratulated him, and wished him joy. But when he came home he told his brother what had passed: By thy life, O my brother, what is this? said Cais: couldst thou not consent to connect thyself with the daughters of our uncles, the swoln-bosomed damsels of the earth? but must thou have recourse to the daughters of the tribe of Ghorab? Reproach me not, O brother, said Malik, for what could not be resisted; it is the only God that has power over love. Hearts communicate and meet of themselves, and the only messenger is the glance of the eyes. They were thus talking when Antar approached, who overhearing Cais reproaching his brother, God forbid, O king, said he, that you should rail at lovers, and increase the flames of passion. Your brother has not acted violently or oppressively, and has done nothing but what all the world has done before: you ought to partake in his sorrows, and not blame him or reproach him. Let him have his way in his passion, for he has not distressed you in any point for which you should rebuke him. On this the countenance of Cais brightened; he wished him joy: As the business is as you describe it, said he, and you yourself encourage it, let us also complete your nuptials and his on the same day. That affair, said Antar, entirely depends on my uncle

Malik; permit me to expect my happiness from the king of all slaves.

On the next day Prince Malik sent to the Sheikh he and she camels, and variegated robes, and cattle, and precious jewels, and howdahs, brilliant with magnificent velvet, and servants and slaves, and with them horses and sheep, ordering them to be expeditious, on account of the passion that was in his heart: and he appointed a certain hour on the seventh day. When all these presents reached the tribe of Ghorab, the old and young rejoiced; they passed those days in the greatest delight, and slaughtered the sheep and the camels, and filled the goblets with wine, and they were perfectly happy to the exclusion of every sorrow. Soon after, Prince Malik clad himself in the robes of noble-born kings, and his beauty was more dazzling than the new moon. On this expedition Antar accompanied him, fearful lest some enemy should waylay him; and he took ten horsemen and five of his brothers. They wandered through the Arab dwellings till they reached the tribe of Ghorab, and Prince Malik dismounted at the marriage canopy, his brothers also alighting round the tent. The feast immediately commenced; the damsels waved the cymbals, and the horsemen flourished their swords; exclamations of joy arose, and the cups went round; and thus they continued till the laughing day was spent, when the nymph was married to Malik. All the chiefs and lords of the tribe soon fell asleep, on account of the watchings and

fatigue; but by morning their joys were converted into sorrows, and shots were precipitated at them from arrows, for which there is no surgeon; for fortune never gives, but it pillages; is never stationary, but it revolves; is never merry, but it sorrows; never bestows, but it takes back; never joys, but it grieves; never sweetens, but it embitters. Now the cause of the interruption of their happiness was, that Hadifah, having accepted the composition for the blood of his son from Cais, returned home. What hast thou done, son of Beder? exclaimed his wife; hast thou sold the blood of thy son for things that have no value? hast thou received, as the price of his blood, grazing flocks, and forgotten thy infamy and disgrace amongst every passing Arab? By God, no more shalt thou be my husband or my friend; I will never acknowledge a coward for my husband. Upon this she forbade him her presence for three days. On the fourth day he entered, and found her in great grief, the tears rushing down in torrents, whilst she thus expressed her sorrows:

"Hadifah! thou wilt never be secure from the "foe; thou wilt never be protected from the ma- "lignity of misfortunes. What! has Cais slain my "only one, and hast thou accepted camels and "grazing flocks? Thou hast put on, O Hadifah, "garments of shame and indelible disgrace, even to "thy dying day. Dost thou not dread that thy "foes will say, Hadifah's heart is the heart of a "girl? Away with what Haml, son of Beder, said,

" every fated event must take place. Retaliate with
" the barbs of the spears, and with the blades of the
" thin scimitars; otherwise leave me, that I may
" weep day and night in streaming tears. Haply
" my death will speedily come, and the penetrating
" arrows will overtake me. Shall I ever take to my
" love a coward husband, whose life is the baseness of
" life? Alas! alas! for my murdered boy—cruelly
" murdered. Alas! he was stretched dead on the
" desert! Behold the birds of the Erak, how they
" mourn, like me, on the tops of the waving
" branches! but does the turtle-dove feel an anguish
" like my anguish, even when it is dashed down
" with the arrows of dispersion? O day of the race!
" I shall mourn thee for one who excelled in every
" mental virtue. O that thy dawn had never seen
" the night, and the face of the full moon had never
" been shaded in obscurity! O horses of the race!
" that ye had drank of poison, diluted in the purling
" streams! that your backs had been weighed down
" with the burthens of the firmly-rooted mountains!
" for your race has cast a sorrow at me that can
" never subside but in death."

At hearing these verses the tears gushed from the eyes of Hadifah; his regrets increased. (The women heard these verses, and the shepherds and the horsemen used to repeat them, and they were called the exciters of woe). Daughter of my uncle, said he, I only accepted the compensation by Sinan's advice; for when he saw the ancient Sheikhs issue forth

against us, and endeavour to make peace between us, Thy son cannot be recalled, said he to me, and it will be as well to listen to my advice: thus it is; take from Cais the compensation, renounce violence and hostility; then station over Cais and his brothers some spies and emissaries, till you catch one of them; kill him, and thus accomplish your designs: fight them at your pleasure, but just now you cannot possibly succeed. This conversation took place between him and me, and ever since we made the peace, I have had spies stationed over the Absians, and I will afflict them in one who is the dearest of the tribe. Thus he continued to soothe her, till the account of Prince Malik's marriage in the tribe of Ghorab reached him; and immediately he assembled his brothers Awef and Handhala, to whom he communicated Malik's situation; but not a word would he say to his brother Haml, because he was aware he would not obey him in such a project. His brothers assented, and they set out with seventy horsemen of the tribe as soon as it was dark (but in his great exultation Hadifah forgot to ask his informant whether Antar had accompanied Malik). They travelled over the wilds till they reached the tribe of Ghorab by morning, and they found them all asleep. Hadifah observed the nuptial canopy apart from the tents; he made towards it, and the horsemen encompassed him, preceded by his brothers. As the horses galloped forward the slaves started up, and the earth far and wide was in com-

motion. Shouts arose among the horsemen. Antar sprang upon his stallion, and the tribe of Ghorab mounted in all fifty horsemen, old and young. Antar was the foremost in the contest; and when he saw the men, he knew, beyond a doubt, they were of the tribe of Fazarah: he soon recognized Hadifah and his brothers; Hola! O Ebe Hijar, he cried, this day will I bring down destruction upon thee; it was for such a day as this that I have waited. I must indeed appease the anguish of my bosom on ye all, ye wretches! He shouted at the horsemen and assailed them, playing away his spear through their sides; Abjer, under him, hastened down, like a torrent, rushing against the horses. But Hadifah, beholding his exploits, was afraid lest he should fail in his attempt; he determined, however, to avail himself of the opportunity; he burst into the nuptial canopy, there to slay Malik, and make his friends mourn for him. Whilst he was forming this resolve, lo! Malik rushed out upon him. He was scarcely awaked from sleep, immersed as he had been in the sweetest of enjoyments. He was also intoxicated, and his garments were scented with musk and saffron. As he beheld Hadifah, and the horsemen prepared to attack him, he was inflamed with ardour, and a foolish pride worked through him. Moreover, being anxious to exhibit to his bride a proof of his courage, he mounted his horse, he snatched up his spear, and he assaulted in his arrogance, making at Hadifah and his brothers, and crying out, I am

Malik, son of Zoheir! He shouted on his steed; he was intoxicated, and his hand being unable to direct the bridle, his horse precipitated him to the ground. He attempted to arise in the excess of his spirit, but Hadifah overtook him on his mare, and smote him with his sword on his skull, and the instrument descended half way down his body. Convinced that he had killed him, he returned to his comrades, crying out, O retaliation of grief! But being afraid of Antar, and well aware were he to find him he would make him drink of a violent death, he fled in haste home, and his fury subsided.

He left Antar occupied with the remainder of the Nazareans, and no one followed him, but those who were more immediately about him. The party opposed to Antar were soon diminished, and most of them being slain, he returned to Malik, just to see him in the agonies of death, where he was lying bathed in blood in front of his horse. At this sight he screamed and threw himself upon him: he smote himself with his hands like a woman deprived of her children. O full moon of perfection! he exclaimed, never, never did I imagine such would be thy end. And he let his head fall upon his knees; he kissed his face till he nearly swooned upon his body; and his tears streamed over Malik's cheeks, who at last just opened his eyes. He attempted to speak and move his lips, but he could not, so violent was the fate that had fallen upon him; he could only point with his fingers towards him; he bade him farewell,

and his spirit groaned in the excess of agony. Antar's afflictions became more vehement; and whilst they were in this state, behold! Malik's bride rushed forth, her face uncovered; her hair dishevelled, and surrounded by a number of women and high-bosomed damsels beating their breasts and throwing dust upon their heads. Malik's bride smote her cheeks with her hands: and when she reached the death-place of her husband, she thus spoke:

"I will weep for thee, not in festivities or nuptials, but in spears, and swords, and shields. I will weep for him who is gone, and has abandoned me after having become my husband. I will weep for him who is gone and made me heir to interminable grief, even to the end of time. I will weep for the full moon, whose light is fled, whose glory is eclipsed and destroyed. Alas! my lord has vanished from me; he has left me a solitary being; he is concealed from me in the darkness of the grave. I am left forlorn in the morning to mourn my beloved, whom I knew but yesterday. I will weep for him: I will mourn for him as long as the moon of heaven and the sun shall shine. No joy shall ever again please me; never again shall my soul be at ease. I will weep for my lord; I will grieve for him who has widowed me on my marriage morn. O that before his dissolution I had drank of the cup of death in my soul. I will make fortune and the

" world weep in concert with me for my beloved,
" or my senses must be annihilated. Never will I
" cease to mourn him in sorrowing strains, as long
" as the bird of the Erak shall pour its piteous
" notes."

Malik's bride did not cease till Malik, with a sigh, expired, and he was united to his God. Antar wrapped him up in his clothes, and tying him on the back of his horse, took him away; and as he sought the land of Abs, he thus exclaimed:

" Alas! O raven hastening in thy flight, send me
" thy wings, for I have lost my support. Is it true
" that I have seen the day of Malik's death and
" murder, or has it befallen me in a dream? The
" light of day is darkened in grief for the youth,
" the hero of Abs and of Ghiftan. O that Ghabra
" had never been! that Dahis had never been!—
" that the day had never been, when that wager
" was made! O it was a day black in look, harsh
" and stern, the night wanderers of evil might dread
" its calamity. O by God! my eyes will ever be
" ulcered on his account in ever streaming tears,
" till the moment I see the bones of Hadifah dis-
" persed, and death close upon him. Alas! my
" force is weakened; I am weighed down by mis-
" fortune, and my heart is in continued palpitation
" for him who was my strength whenever the foes
" unsheathed their swords against me to cut off my
" fingers. Now he is gone, who will be our de-
" fence when the nocturnal invaders shall surprise

" us? O woe is me! how fell he from his horse,
" and my sword and my spear were not near him?
" The fated arrow of the all-bounteous Archer cast
" him down. O that when it cast him down, it
" had cast me down too! O that my soul had bade
" farewell, and that his hands had not beckoned to
" me a double adieu! Alas! his kindnesses, were I
" to comment on them, my tongue would fail ere I
" could repeat them. I swear I will not sleep from
" taking vengeance! I will not repose, but on the
" back of my stallion. Never shall my sword cease
" to cleave those Fazareans, till the desert be con-
" verted into a sea of crimson blood. Sons of
" Beder! your power will not be the strongest
" when we join the plain in the day of spear-thrusts!
" if I do not make blood flow on account of Malik,
" and leave his foes in the mansions of disgrace,
" may my heart never cease, night and day, to
" repeat to me what has oppressed it, and cast me
" down. Soon will I extirpate the sons of Beder
" and all Fazarah; for I shall never have succeeded
" in my hopes, unless I accomplish my project
" in retaliating with the thrust of my spear and the
" blow of my sword."

Antar returned to the tents, and there were only fifty of his horsemen and Malik's two brothers that had escaped, and they endured what no one ever endured before, so that they were nearly dead with grief. And as they approached the dwellings, Cais met them with the whole tribe in tears and mourn-

ing; his mother Temadhur smote her bosom, till she came close to her son, who was tied on the horse's back; and the land of the tribe of Abs was in universal convulsion. Cais wished to bury Malik; but his mother would not permit him. I will not bury my son till to-morrow, said she; I will go to our foe, and I will demand the blood of my son of the family of Beder, or never will the flame of my heart be quenched. We will never allow thee to do such an act, my mother, said Cais; we will not let thee go to our enemies, but we will go with our sharp-edged swords, and our tall spears, and our sturdy warriors. We will have vengeance for our brother, perfidiously murdered, and all the family of Beder will I put to death. Thus they entered the dwellings, and continued their grief and lamentation, insensible to all consolation for Malik.

As to Hadifah, when he returned to the tribe of Fazarah, he had but few of his companions remaining. Sinan met him, for it was he who contrived these projects, till this eventful disaster befel the tribe of Abs. His brother Haml and Rebia also met him. Well, said Sinan, hast thou effected the deed that we planned? We have sought the bird, and have chased it, said Hadifah, and when we had chased it, we sacrificed it. Oh! Hadifah, said Rebia, tell me the meaning of these words, for my anxiety is extreme, and I know you have nothing concealed from me. O Rebia, said

he, we must inform you; thus it is, we have slain Malik, son of King Zoheir. On hearing this, the light became darkened in the eyes of Rebia. Verily, cried he, you have passed all bounds in your perfidy. O son of Beder; of evil omen will be this murder; frightful indeed will be the consummation of this deed. Son of Zeead, said Hadifah, as his spirit was roused against him, there is no evil but near thee and the tribe of Abs. By the faith of a noble Arab, were there not engagements and sacred rights between us, I would make thy head fly off with this sword; thou son of ordure, what means this talk? Begone from us, whence thou camest in an unlucky hour, and be again of the filth of thy tribe; and turning his bridle, he sought his own dwelling. As to Rebia, he went back to his brothers, and his mind felt relieved. He told them of the murder of Malik, and of Hadifah's actions, adding, This is the reward of him who abandons his relations, and takes refuge with strangers. He then made his preparations for departure, he and his brothers, and all that belonged to his family, and only waited till the sunset, when they set out for the land of the Absians. Approaching the tents, they perceived the whole population in confusion, with cries, and the Absians wandering over the desert. They had deposited Malik in the tomb, and the women were screaming in their tears. Rebia dismounted, and threw away his turban off his head, and tore all the garments he had on (his brothers

doing the same), and there was not one but whose grief was excessive, and sobs incessant. Rebia came up to the grave; he threw himself upon it, and embraced it; and as his sorrow, and tears, and sighs, and lamentations augmented, he thus spoke:

"O unexpected misery! O mind-distracting ca-
"lamity! O misfortune! when I think of it, the
"light and darkness are one to me. O my eyelids!
"perhaps ye will aid me in my grief, for to me all
"joy would be sacrilege. Aid me then, for I have
"lost a youth, the age could not boast of such an-
"other. O, I marvel how Malik could be en-
"compassed in a tomb, and thus be hid, for he was
"a full moon! the crown of Abs! its glory! its
"defence! its honour! its spear! and its sword!
"Aid me then with eagerness, O my friends, sleep
"not in vengeance for Malik. I swear by the
"sacred wall, and the shrine of truth, and also by
"Zemzem, and the Lord of the Temple, that I
"will not permit the retaliation of Malik to pass
"away, were I even, in its results, to drink of the
"cup of death."

* When Rebia had finished, torrents of tears gushed from his eyes; he and his brothers hastened

* Abulfeda mentions that Rebia had sided with Hadifah on account of the quarrel that had arisen between him and Cais, when he forced him to resign the celebrated armour; that Cais slew Hadifah's son, and that Hadifah waylaid Malik, upon which Rebia returned to his allegiance.

to King Cais and embraced him, excusing themselves to him, and complaining of what they had experienced in their absence. After condoling with Cais, they repaired to Antar. Antar was seated by Malik's tomb, his head hanging over his knees. As Rebia drew near, he met him, and stood up, kissing his hand, and clearing their hearts of sorrow, and they all vowed to take retaliation for Malik. Rebia gave orders to his slaves, and they brought him twenty camels, which he distributed amongst the poor and the orphans, having first slaughtered them on the tomb of Malik. But King Cais's heart revolted at Rebia, for he was full of deceit and cunning, and he wished to put his friendship to the test. Waiting till night came on, he summoned one of his maidens, called Bedrah, and said to her, Hie thee to the dwellings of Rebia, and conceal thyself among the tents; quit him not till he is alone with his wife and asleep; listen to their conversation, for I fear again we shall be annoyed by Rebia's stratagems, and all our tranquillity vanish and be lost. The maiden set out, and stopping among the tents, she concealed herself among the baggage-camels; and when it was bed-time, Rebia came and laid himself down to repose. And as he was lying on his bed, his wife came unto him, and was about to take off her clothes and sleep by his side; but he cried out to her, Begone from me! the sorrows and anguish I endure, suffice me; after the murder of

Malik, what has a man to do with woman? Then as his regrets increased; he thus spoke:

"Sleep is forbidden; for how bitter is the past "through fear of some evil tidings at hand. O, it is "an event to delight the hearts of our foes; it is the "road of mortals that turns the hair grey. For him in "the evening, women are in tears, and in agonies of "grief they remain with those that watch. What! "after the murder of Malik, son of our Zoheir, "does woman desire the results of marriage? He "who joys in the assassination of Malik, let him "come to our tribe by the light of day; he will find "the women full of sorrow, grieving for him in the "morning, before the dawn is illumined. They would "conceal their faces, and cover themselves, but in "the day they return to be seen by spectators. "They scratch their faces for the youth—pure as "the fountain stream—our intrepid Knight—the "emblem of joy—the high-minded hero—the pro- "tector of our women, and the remover of all "shame. When we adhered to him, we adhered "to a horseman, firm and resolute in the scene of "battles. I see nought for his murder among the "tribes, but the camels loaded with pack-saddles. "Knights, the rust of the sword is on them, as if "the steel were smeared with pitch; let every horse "of our steeds be led out, tractable, well-trained, "undaunted; that we may raise at Moreicab a dusty "war, and make them drink of cups of perdition.

" He who joys in the murder of Malik, let him drink " of it at the edge of the deadly scimitar. Soon ye " shall know, if we once meet with the sword and " the spear, fraught with peril, who can caper his " high-blooded steed over the heads, and who will " gnaw his nails in shame. Do ye think we will " abandon Malik? No! by the God of the Shrine, " and secrecy! till we have exterminated your chiefs " to revenge him. O Haml, and your knights! O " Ebe Hidjar! O Absian Antar, charge over their " lands—God forbid thou shouldst forget retaliation " for Malik. O Aboolfawaris! never let the inva- " sion cease with the sabre, till they haste away in " flight. Show them the spear-thrust and the sword- " blow: Oh, slay for Malik the whole tribe of those " wretches! O Aboolfawaris, let there not be one " in their land to stand forth, or establish himself in " a tent! Sons of Bedr—ye shall not drink of the " cup of shame, but of the burning water of liquid " fire. O Cais, destroy them all for Malik, and re- " move the dishonour with the murder of Hadifah! " Kill Haml for him and Awef; let the flints of war " strike fire in retaliation, and I too will to-morrow " extirpate them, and will pierce them with the " mortal spear. I will abandon the carcasses as " carrion on the desert, as if they had drank of the " wine of calamity. If I do not execute my word, " then am I the offspring of illegitimacy, and a mine " of infamy."

The damsel instantly quitted the dwellings in the

obscurity, and joined King Cais, to inform him of the beautiful rhymes she had heard; and he was delighted at the purity of Rebia's intentions.

When it was day, King Cais went out to the tomb of his brother; thither also came the chiefs of the tribe, and Rebia, and his brothers, and all his dependants. Cais welcomed him, and showed him great honour. Here they remained three days, but on the fourth day they assembled to consult, and they resolved on marching; they sought for Antar, but he was not to be found; no tidings of him whatever. This was a grievous blow, and his anguish was renewed; for he thought, he was enraged at the arrival of Rebia. He remained in deep melancholy till the forenoon, when behold, a dust from the quarter of the tribe of Fazarah arose. The Absians were confounded, till the dust clearing away, there appeared from beneath it he and she-camels marching along, and howdahs, and an immense quantity of cattle. Cais was amazed, and galloped towards it to learn what it meant, followed by the horsemen; and as they came near to it, lo! it was Antar.

Cais advanced, and inquired what was the matter: O my lord, said Antar, as he wept for Malik, and sobbed, truly, I have pursued the track of the villains, and I have in some measure had retaliation for thy brother. Soon will the tribe of Fazarah come against thee; be prepared for the contest; brace up thy resolution, and summon thy men. This is thy brother's property, which he had sent as

the dower of his bride to the tribe of Ghorab; and it is come into my possession by the will of God. I have slain ten horsemen of Fazarah, and amongst them Awef, Hadifah's brother. Last night, my lord, I watched till midnight, when I fell asleep, and lo! my lord, Malik stood before me; and, beckoning with his fingers, said to me, O Aboolfawaris, dost thou sleep, and I unrevenged? Hast thou forgotten our former friendship? Before thee many have been faithful to their friends; be thou faithful also to him, who was slain but yesterday: and then he vanished, whilst the tears trickled down his cheeks. I instantly awoke from my sleep, and I felt like one misfortune-struck. I mounted, and took Shibaob before me, and sought the land of Fazarah, in the darkness of the night. I heard the noise of camels ahead of me; I approached them, and saw a hundred warriors, surrounding them right and left. I resolved to engage them, but ten of them turned upon me, the foremost of whom was Awef, Hadifah's brother, who cried out, I am Awef, son of Bedr. Overjoyed, I met him with a spear-thrust through the chest, and it passed through his back. I pursued the horse to destroy their riders; and I well know, I slew ten of their heroes, besides the men I wounded.

The cause of this was, that Hadifah, after his dispute with Rebia, consulted with his party, and sent his brother Awef to the tribe of Ghorab, with one hundred horsemen, saying, Drive hither the

property which Malik sent them, whilst the Absians are engaged with their sorrows: endeavour to bring me his bride, that I may rip open her belly, for I am resolved to destroy them root and branch. Awef did as he was directed, and effected his purpose. As to the women, he did not succeed with them, for they fled to the mountain-tops; but on his return he encountered Antar, and every vestige of him was erased; for speedily were ten of his heroes killed. The fugitives repaired to Hadifah, and as they communicated his brother's death, his life nearly quitted his body. He determined instantly to march against the Absians, but Sinan advised him to collect the troops of the tribes and the lakes, till Numan's armies should arrive. In this manner they continued making preparations for war and battle; and such was the treachery and stratagem they harboured in their minds.

As to Antar, he passed his time in his tent, like a spirit of the night, when lo! Khemisah, Ibla's handmaiden, came to him and said, O Aboolfawaris, my mistress sends her compliments to you, and tells you, that as this is the time of total abandonment to grief and sorrow, she wishes this night to go with a party of her cousins to the lake, and she desires you will go there also, to protect her from the night-wanderers of the time.

At hearing this, Antar was much delighted and overjoyed at the fidelity of his mistress's mind under all circumstances. So he took up his weapons im-

mediately, whilst Khemisa returned to Ibla, and informed her of his acquiescence and obedience. Now it is very remarkable, that Amarah at that period had stationed his spies over Ibla till that very night on which she went out to the lake, requesting her cousin to protect her. Informed by some of the women of this, Amarah could almost have flown with joy; but he waited till the darkness obscured the land, when he quitted the tents, and put on women's clothes that the hearts of the girls might not revolt at him. He continued till he came to the lake: staring about he saw the damsels, and Ibla among them, like a brilliant moon. At this sight his senses were in agitation; phrensy and distraction seized him, and he pounced down upon Ibla like a voracious eagle. She thought him a woman, but when she experienced the force of his muscles, she was aware that he who held her was a man. Fully sensible of the dishonour and infamy, she cried out in his face, Who art thou, thou black greasy pot! thou foulest of hogs? The damsels were aghast and amazed. I am Amarah, said he, whom you have repulsed and discarded. Ibla's heart fluttered, in hopes her cousin might be near her. She roared at Amarah like a lioness; Thou son of the ordure of cowards, dost thou not fear Antar?

Antar was a witness of all that passed, for as soon as Ibla had sent to him, he went out and concealed himself behind the sand-hills, where he waited till Ibla came with the girls; and they were amusing themselves among the hillocks when Amarah started

out. The universe turned black in the eyes of Antar: he burst forth like a furious leopard, till he closed on the cuckold Amarah. He roared and bellowed at him, and seized him by the small of the belly, and raising him, he dashed him on the ground, and almost pounded his bones. In the excess of his terror Amarah was in a most unseemly plight; he was dying in fear of Antar, who on seeing his ridiculous situation, laughed in the violence of his rage. Arise, thou greasy black pot, he cried; mayest thou never drink of rain, or a drop of moisture, thou bastard! Were it not out of respect for the women and thy kindred, I would behead thee with this sword.

But as to Ibla, when she saw Amarah in such a filthy state, she spit at him, whilst the women surrounded him, and laughed at him. Antar, indeed, would have put him to death, had not this happened to him, and Ibla also interceded for him. The girls ran away, roaring with laughter, and he had nothing for it but to retreat to the lake and take off his clothes, and wash his legs and his thighs: and thus he returned home without his clothes, well aware, too, that this event could not be kept secret from the tribe, but that the girls would tell it all over the place; he went to his mother and his brothers, blubbering most piteously, and told them what had happened to him. Thou unlucky wight! said Rebia, what need hadst thou to do this? Verily, thou hast made us a tale of tales: never can we raise up our heads to any one again. Never, never, said

Amarah, will I quit the tents again; never will I let a creature see me—not a walker or a rider, if you do not retaliate for me, and remove from me this shame. Oh! that I had thought better of it, and had left myself dead by the side of the lake! Oh, that I had not seen myself in so foul a condition! and Ibla too, she laughed at me, and cursed me, and stopped her nose at me. Thou accursed fellow, thou son of an accursed woman, cried Rebia—what retaliation wouldst thou? The man has not struck thee, or wounded thee, that we can retaliate for thee: thou wouldst indeed play the bravo to thy mistress, and thy plight proves thy courage. But by the past and future, thank the glorious God that he did not leave thee dead on the lake side. By God, he has treated thee nobly; it will be well for thee to abandon such practices, and talk no more to us of Antar. The girls will soon lampoon thee in their songs, and thou wilt be disgraced amongst slaves and chiefs. Ah, woe! woe! grief of griefs! said Amarah, Antar will enjoy those charms, those beauties; and I—this disgraceful situation must ever bespeak my fears. Rebia still abused him; Thy ill stars will not cease, he cried, till thou hast worked our total ruin. Avaunt from before me this instant; let the iniquity of thy acts suffice us. May God curse the father of thy mustachioes! Thus Amarah remained, emancipated by the consequences of his terror, and quitted his brother's presence.

This circumstance with Ibla soon spread abroad, and all the women, and men, and girls, and boys,

and slaves, and slave-girls, joined in the laugh against Amarah, singing these verses, whilst Amarah heard them. The women and shepherdesses sang them at their spindles; for there was a girl among the Absians who could compose verses: she was very eloquent, so she repeated these verses on Amarah the cuckold, and they were recollected by all the women and girls, and they were as follows:

"Amarah, leave alone the beautiful, full-hipped
"damsels; let alone all disputes about the lovely
"girls, for thou canst not plunge into the sea of
"deaths, and thou art no horseman in the day of
"battle. Aspire no more to Ibla; if thou dost but
"look at her, thou wilt see horrors from the lion of
"the forests. As to the thin quivering spear, touch
"not its strength, nor the cleaving scimitar. Ibla
"is a fawn chased by a lion, with eyes that afflict
"with disorder the stoutest in health. Let alone
"all contest about her, or the unflinching Antar
"will make thee drink of death. Thou didst not
"cease thy obstinacy, till thy foul condition gave
"evidence against thee. All the girls laughed at
"thee; thou wert the carrion of the plains and de-
"serts; thou wert the common talk of the merry,
"and the laughing-stock for every passenger. Thou
"camest to us in the robes of dyed silk, thou black
"greasy kettle! As thou didst meet us, a lion
"met thee, whom all the lion-heroes acknowledge
"in the carnage: then fear trembled in thy heart;
"intoxication quitted thee, and thou wert restored
"to thy senses. Nothing but contempt remained

" for thee, when thou didst retire like a dunghill.
" Ibla beheld thee laid low, stretched out; and all
" the beautiful high-hipped damsels with her. We
" held our noses at thee, as we laughed at thee,
" and quizzed thee. The Antar of Knights, the
" lion of the cave came—he, who in generosity is a
" sea of liberality; and thou art the vilest of all
" those that ever crossed a horse—the noblest of
" those who are tenacious of their lives. We are
" like the sweetest flowerets; scented like the violets
" and the camomile; and Ibla amongst us is like
" the branch of the tamarisk: her beauty is the full
" moon, and the sun of the desert. Thou wouldst
" possess her by violence and outrage—thou, the
" vilest of all the dogs that bark. Die in grief,
" otherwise live in contempt; for never, never, will
" there be an end of our lampoons upon thee."

These verses were soon made public amongst the women and young girls, who used to sing them at their spindles. Amarah and his brothers heard them, and they melted from rage and shame.

About this time arrived a slave from Mootegeredah to Cais, announcing fresh troubles and disasters, and saying, Numan has sent against you his brother Aswad, and with him an innumerable army, among which are the tribe of Aamir, with the Brandisher of Spears, and the tribe of Darem with Locait. Be on your guard also against the tribe of Fazarah, for they are assembling bodily against you, and are preparing to fight you. The cause of this new misfortune was the contemptible Sinan; for he despatched

the men he had with him to King Nûman, directing them to inform him of what had passed, and the disgrace and indignities he had suffered from the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and that Antar had said, Were Chosroe Nushirvan, or the Emperor of the Worshippers of the Cross to demand Harith, I would not deliver up to any of them even a single hair of his head, till after the contest of swords that blinds the sight, and mangles bodies.

Numan's fury increased, and his two eyes were like fire-balls. As long as this tribe exists in the desert, he cried, I shall have no authority. I shall enjoy no esteem, no consideration with any one. He at the instant summoned Prince Aswad, and told him what had happened, and was preparing, adding, The tribe of Abs is harbouring against me acts of iniquity and perverseness. Harith is now with Antar, and he presumes to protect him against me, and he fears me not, knowing as he does, that Harith slew my child, and has set my heart on fire, and that he also murdered Khalid in my private apartments; it is incumbent on me to tear out every vestige of him, and of the tribe of Abs, were they even to fly from me to the rising of the sun. Know, my brother, said Aswad, much troubled, that as this tribe has committed acts of rapacity against your government, your influence is diminished; and there is no other expedient, but that you unburthen your heart of your enemies, and despatch an army with me to be employed in the establishment of your sacred dignity. Draw forth

all the Arabs from every quarter against them, and let us devastate their whole country.

Numan felt his pains relieved; he ordered out, under his command, an army of twenty thousand horse, and he sent messengers to every Arab tribe to enforce their obedience, ordering them to march in his service. Mootegeredah was much distressed, and was alarmed for the tribe of Abs and her brother; and as Numan had already cast her off, and had renounced all affection for her from the time he had heard of her delivering Harith from his grasp, she sent one of her slaves to her brother to inform him of what was preparing. Aswad is proceeding against you, said she, with twenty thousand warriors, armed with sharp swords and spears, besides the hordes to which messengers are despatched. Aswad exhibited all his active zeal; he felt stronghearted as to the tribe of Fazarah, and he depended upon them above all. As to King Cais, as soon as the messenger arrived, as we mentioned, and related the march of Prince Aswad, he was greatly alarmed; he summoned the noble Absian Chiefs, and the dreadful Antar, and consulted with them about engaging Prince Aswad. May it be easy on thee, O King, said the Chiefs; we will march with thee, and before thee, and we will not be sparing of our lives for thee: we will meet Aswad, were all that dwell on the waste and the wilds with him. O King, said Harith, it is for those condemned to die that I should weep and lament. I am the object of this wrath. I am he who is the cause of these wars.

But I will instantly write to my tribe of Marah, and I will show thee what I will do with this Aswad and his armies. No, by the faith of an Arab, said Antar, we require not thy aid in this affair. We are sufficient for the whole universe, were I not alarmed for our families at the treachery of the tribe of Fazarah, that they would, during our absence, invade our lands, and capture our families, and plunder our property. But let us instantly proceed against them, and let us scatter them over every wild and plain, or else let us make Hadifah swear he will not be either for us or against us. In such circumstances and calamities, this is the wisest plan; for if the sons of Beder are not fettered down by us, they will occupy our hearts in the hour of battle. When Antar had finished, he cried out, To arms, my cousins! come on to the tribe of Fazarah! retaliate on them! Thus saying, he sprang on the back of Abjer. And when the Absians heard what he said, and saw what he did, they followed him, and amongst the foremost was King Cais. They set out, resolved on fighting the tribe of Fazarah, amounting to four thousand horsemen, mailed and clothed in armour, undaunted at death, and fearless of defeat.

Hadifah was confounded; he called out to his tribe and his assembled host; they put on their armour and their brilliant corslets, seeking the battle and the combat, life and death being indifferent to them; in number about ten thousand horsemen, headed by Hadifah, an adept in perfidy

and treachery. He was mounted on Ghabra, and in his hand he bore his tall spear; but his heart and mind were on fire, as he thus encouraged his troops:

"Sons of Beder, if ye do not exert your whole "souls in the field of battle with the cleaving sci- "mitars, the arrows of infamy will hurl ye down "on every side, and ye will become a common tale "to the ear. What! can our eyes know rest now "my brother Awef is gone? Shall our eyelids "swoon in sleep on the couch of ease? We were "content with the murder of Malik from the Ab- "sians, and copious tears ulcerated their eyes: they "have grieved, but they have tortured my heart by "the murder of the warrior; and the death of Awef "is the severest of pains. O, may I lose the spi- "rited horsemen, and may my fingers be unable to "move the spear in the hot contest, if I do not "leave the land of Abs a desert, and their women "captives, deprived of their garments. I will wreak "my vengeance on all the tribe of Abs, and no in- "tercessor shall avail them."

The tribes soon came in sight of each other, and they met on a sand-hill called Moreicab. When their eyes encountered, the shouts arose, so that both armies were startled. The Absians cried out, Vengeance! retaliation for Malik! The Fazareans cried out, Retaliation for the slaughtering knight! In the excess of their rage and rancour, there was not one but rushed on and shouted; the horses crushed against each other and neighed—the men

launched forward, and then burst asunder—long lasted the sword-blow—the combat was fierce—misfortune and calamity were at their height—the troops were mingled together—ambition was roused—swords clashed—every drinker was glutted with the wine of agitation—clouds of dust mounted east and west—horrors and wonders were exhibited by the Chief Antar. He succeeded in his wishes against the foe—he overpowered them with the force of a tyrant, never seen in later days—the dead fell singly and in couples—blood gushed from the jugular veins—reproach and pretences were in vain—the universal bray and din grew more terrific among the warriors—what a frightful day! The horses tossed about the skulls of the dead, and the warriors were disgusted with their corslets and mail—the mace and battle-axe laboured among them—every fierce hero roared, and the day was dreadful, as one, who has described it, thus says:

"The millstones of war revolved in death, and "warriors were pounded by them. Heroes were "hurled dead on the field, where many knights lay "stretched out. Swords cleaved every joint, and "spears rent open the bowels. The blow of the "battle-axe dashed off the eyebrows, as the arrows "tore out the eyeballs. In the scene of car-"nage were heard echoes from the blows of the "sword edge against the skulls of the combatants. "Breast-plates were shivered by the spears, and "the pierce of the lance rent through all opposition. "In every direction heroes lay dead, felled low in

"every plain. Hands and legs were cut off on op-
"posite sides, and heads flew off from the branch-
"tops. The steeds galloped over the plain, whose
"brave riders were disgraced, hacked to pieces.
"The eagles of the air hovered over them, pouncing
"upon them to pluck out their eyes. The coward
"fled openly, and ran away alarmed at his very
"imagination. The courageous in war bellowed
"like wild beasts, and resembled contending lions.
"The messengers of death prowled about for lives,
"and separated families from their children. The
"cup-bearer of death circled every glass to the
"chieftains that intoxicated them for ever. The
"swords rang a tune, at which every warrior re-
"joiced in his glory. Men were dotted about, and
"rushed promiscuously to the fight. The chargers
"of the combatants pranced in sport, and charged
"incessantly over the back of the earth. The
"dancers started up, and every tribe had recourse
"to all its manœuvres. Antar, the knight of
"knights, kindled the hell-fire on the day of the
"combat of the armed warriors. He rushed upon
"the foe, and extirpated the chieftains that re-
"mained as pledges of his victory—he dispersed—
"he drove them stupefied away, great and noble
"as they were. He captured the first of their
"tribes and princes clothed in iron. He protected
"the chieftains of the race of Abs, who exhibited
"their martial feats in the field. Every instant he
"left a foe dead—he every moment defended those
"he loved. The Chiefs of Adnan were encon-

" raged; they persevered in their exertions and their " achievements."

The battle continued to rage, and the eagles of death to hover over their heads; every spot and place was darkened—man and beast were exhausted by the fall of the spear and the sabre. They persisted in this horrid contest till evening came on, when the two armies separated, the whole country being crammed with the dead. The greatest number were of the tribe of Fazarah, for Antar cut through them, and he relieved his heart amongst them on account of the murder of Prince Malik. He retired towards evening, and the blood was coagulated on his shoulders, like camel's livers. The Absians descended to a retired spot, exulting in the intrepidity of Antar, and what he had done that dusty day, among the Fazareans; and as they counted the dead, they amounted to thirty, all stern-faced warriors. O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, said he to Oorwah, in one day then, thirty of us have been slain by the tribe of Fazarah. By the faith of an Arab, to-morrow I will not permit any one to anticipate me in the field, and the theatre of sword-blows and spear-thrusts: I will myself challenge them. O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah, mayst thou be ever protected from harm; if the Fazareans have slain thirty of us, we have filled the tombs with their dead, who cannot be less than a thousand horsemen and warriors; and to-morrow, by the grace of the Almighty Forgiver, we will entirely crush them. Thus they went to rest, establishing guards round the plain,

till morning dawned, when the troops being drawn up, Antar wished to start into the field of battle. But an Absian, called the Sheikh Makzoom, advanced, O Aboolfawaris, said he, I ask thee, in the name of the two eyes of Ibla, daughter of Malik, to permit me to open the door of the battle, and to relieve my heart amongst the tribe of Fazarah, by the force of my thrust and my blow. Antar was ashamed at his adjuring him, so he said, On then, do what you please, O Sheikh, and should your antagonist refuse to fight, point him out to me, that I may show you wonders: and the Sheikh stood forth between the two lines; he galloped and charged. Come on, O tribe of Fazarah, he cried. On to the contest! ye shepherds, ye who are the slaves and herdsmen of the tribe of Abs. The Sheikh Makhzoom had not finished his speech, when Malik, Hadifah's brother, stood before him. Eh! thou son of a cuckold, said he, when were the Fazareans thy shepherds? and instantly he attacked him. The Sheikh Makhzoom met him, and charged with him for an hour; but fatigue soon falling on his limbs, Malik, son of Beder, shouted at him, and smote him with his sword on the side of the neck, and gave him a dreadful wound. So he wheeled round and fled, his neck bathed in blood, and pursued with hisses from the tribe of Fazarah. Eh! thou contemptible Sheikh, cried Antar, thou foul dog! what did such a coward as thyself mean by adjuring me in the name of the eyes of Ibla, daughter of Malik? By the faith of an Arab, were there not between

thee and me some kindred, I would make thee drink of perdition. He quitted him for the battle, and when he came nigh to the Fazarean ranks, Eh! sons of Beder, he exclaimed, what honour is there in sallying forth against an old Sheikh, whom age has bent double? But there is honour in attacking one like Antar, and in subduing him under the dust; let me wreak my vengeance for my lord; I will show you a scene of battle like sparks of fire, and he thus recited:

"O sons of Beder, come on to the contest; unsheath before us the sharp scimitar. Ye have acted foully, and treachery shall root out every vestige of ye, and shall orphan your children. Ye have followed Hadifah, and ye think that he knows how to guide ye on the desert course. He has contradicted what his brother asserted, for he thought peace and perfidy were alike. Ye have slain Malik, and he was noble. Ye struck Dahis, and he was of generous blood. Ye have outraged us, and ye claimed the bet. Was that pretension not an act of violence? Ye have acted foully in every deed. All of ye have acted perfidiously—deep are ye in depravity. Behold the sword that destroyed the foul dealer Pharaoh, and before him Themood, and Aad. Now, meet the reward of your deeds, and taste of speedy death."

Not one of the tribe of Fazarah dared to answer; so he assaulted the right like an eagle: he charged them like an all-powerful lion. Again he challenged, but no one would sally forth against him. He

assaulted the left; he rolled round them, as a revolving millstone, and slew multitudes. He again returned into the open plain. Eh! O sons of Beder, he shouted out, cannot ye ride? Cannot ye fight? Cannot ye speak? And will ye not fly? What! think ye after your treachery to the tribe of Abs, that ye shall escape? Come on—on to the fight; if ye are as ye pretend to be, warriors. It is I who slew your brother Awef; I filled your hearts with terror and dismay. At these words, Hadifah's heart was still more infuriated, and he wished to stand forth; when lo! a knight called Akhtal, son of Sohab, anticipated him; and he was one of the grandees of Fazarah. Eh! thou ordure-born, cried he at Antar, we are come to enjoy the battle; but is there no reason for our declining to contend with thee? Thou canst not know who we are—we cannot combat with a slave, and then presume to seat ourselves among the noble horsemen. As Antar halted to listen to his antagonist, he burst into a loud laugh, and going up to Akhtal, Eh! thou son of a harlot, said he, why art thou ashamed at a black outside, which the Omniscient has created? And thus saying, he rushed at him, and began the contest of thrusts and blows, till, perceiving his adversary give way, he roared at him, in a voice like the thunder in a cloud—it terrified him, and paralysed all his efforts; he smote him under the jaw, and severed his head from his shoulders. The Absians gave a shout of exultation; but the tribe of Fazarah was confounded and stupefied. As Antar continued to gallop and charge, the brother

of the dead started forth, whilst the tears streamed down his cheeks. Antar would not permit him even to wheel once, but he thrust at him with the head of his spear, and hurled him off his horse. It was then Hadifah gave a shout, and throwing his helmet off his head, he roared aloud and attacked, followed by the tribe of Fazarah. Antar met them as the parched land the first of the rain. Whatever he smote he dissected—at whomever he thrust, he hurled dead; and when the horse hemmed him in, his roar drove them back on their haunches, and made them hurl their riders off their backs. Seeing what the Fazareans had done, and how foully they had acted by Antar, King Cais shouted to the Absians, and they attacked as he attacked, and they did as he did. Men met men, and heroes heroes—blood flowed, and streamed—limbs were hewn off. How many brave men were precipitated from their horses! the day was imperceptible—the heroes roared—the warriors still advanced—the cowards fled—spears were shivered—hearts were rent open—heads were cut in twain—blood gushed out—warriors were slain in troops—and it was a scene of calamities, that staggered the imagination. How many necks were severed! how many old and young were slaughtered! The action continued, till night advancing with obscurity, the two armies desisted from the blow of the sword; and Hadifah alighted. Bewildered as to what he should do, he sent for Sinan to consult. My son, said he, I feared this event; I told you not to fight the Absians till the armies of King

Numan should come. Their arrival is at hand. The Absians will never be subdued as long as this black slave of a cuckold is with them. The best plan for us is, to fortify ourselves in the mountains. If not, to-morrow you must start forth between the two ranks, and challenge Cais and his brothers to the combat, that I may show you what I can effect by art and stratagem. Hadifah acquiesced in this project, and early next day he mounted Ghabra, the cause of all these troubles, and hastened over the plain, galloping and charging, and challenging to the contest, and shouting, O tribe of Abs, know, a tribe should not forsake truth, and he is the best of men who distinguishes justice and follows it. This is an affair that has resulted from the race of Dahis and Ghabra; and now, O Cais, here are you and I; between us was the wager. We are the persons who have excited this disturbance among the warriors. Belonging to me and you have been slain persons most dear to us. Let us not permit, O Cais, the women to complain of us; but let us extinguish the war with our lives; let us appease our hearts with our swords and the barbs of our spears. King Cais being alarmed, lest he should be blamed and upbraided, left one of his brothers at his post, and with the rest issued forth to the plain. But no sooner saw Antar what the sons of Zoheir were doing, than he advanced towards Cais. O my lord, said he, why do you thus stand forth to the contest whilst your slave Antar is able to answer your foes in your presence? The man, replied Cais, has com-

plained to me in the name of justice; and were I not to reply to his demand, the Arabs, far and near, would be scandalized at me. Antar, at these words, retired abashed; but the sons of Zoheir rushed upon the sons of Beder. Men met men, and heroes heroes; but the spear-thrust had not commenced against them, when Sinan, accompanied with the Sheiks of the tribe of Fazarah, all bare-headed, came forth. Disgrace to the tribes of Fazarah and Dibyan, they cried, woe to the tribes of Abs and Adnan! May God be on ye! O people, may the descent of our grandfathers and progenitors not be cut off! renounce this outrage—this malice; ride not over the paths of perverseness and dissension; haste not to destroy your lives with the sharp swords; let not your names live amongst posterity for iniquity and sedition! Sheath then the swords of violence and oppression, for they are still sharper than the sharpest scimitar; and consider how many warriors heretofore have been destroyed by perfidy. Upon this, they each seized the bridle of a horseman; they forced him to retire from the spear-thrust and the sword-blow, and compelled them to peace and abandonment of obstinacy. Cais was abashed at their conduct, and acquiesced in their demands, saying, As to your project, I will not thwart it—as to your engagement, I assent to it; but on a condition, that shall be stipulated on your part, namely: Hadifah shall give us hostages from the children of the grandees of the Fazarah tribe, to remain with us till our dispute with Numan is

decided, and moreover, he must swear to us, that he will be neither for us nor against us; for, as our enemies are numerous, and as we have no allies or confederates, we cannot leave in our vicinity persons who may act against us. When Sinan heard this, he felt aware that Cais was an experienced man; but being sensible too, that if he did not agree to this proposal, his life would be exposed to imminent hazards, he repaired to Hadifah, and explained Cais's proposal. My opinion, he continued, is, that you accept the proposition, otherwise, what havoc will they make among us! Wait till we find a proper object for the sword, and till we see the means and road to victory; for King Numan will assuredly root out every vestige of this tribe, and will leave you lords of the highest honours. Thus he brought about a meeting between him and King Cais, and they bound themselves by reciprocal oaths. King Cais then returned home with his horsemen; as did Sinan and Hadifah also, to the tribe of Fazarah. But at early dawn, they collected the children of the horsemen, about two hundred and fifty of the sons of the chiefs, from the age of five to ten, and sent them to King Cais, who, on their arrival, accommodated them with a separate dwelling on one side of the horde, and whatever they wanted was supplied in abundance, and not sparingly, and the whole tribe was greatly delighted at this arrangement.

CHAPTER XXXV.

In the course of a few days, after this was settled, they received news of Prince Aswad's approach, swearing he would not leave one of the whole tribe of Abs alive. Confound his iniquity! cried King Cais, in great dismay. Alas! Aswad will not leave in our dwellings ten men to grind the wheat and barley, or milk the sheep. He summoned Antar and the chief warriors to his presence, and relating to them what he had heard, he requested their advice. O king, said Harith, may you be protected from every peril! Know that this expedition is on my account: I am the object, and these armies are only advancing in quest of me. On me devolves the duty of encountering them. It is I must patiently endure their chastisements: but to-morrow I will go and meet them; and by the faith of noble Arabs, men of integrity, word, and honour, I will not go against them but with ten men alone. I will encounter this Aswad and his warriors, and I will scatter them right and left. No, said Antar, we will not go but in a body to engage Aswad, and we will fight in thy presence with our well-tried swords till not a breath remains. O great king, added Antar, addressing Cais, what means this waiting for further news? the foe is at hand. March

with us against him, that we may extirpate him, root and branch, before the hoofs of their horses trample down our lands. Upon this, Harith wrote a letter to his brother Cosoorah, telling him to join him with the warriors of the tribe of Marah; and he despatched the letter with one of his own horsemen. As to King Cais, he sent forward a thousand men as the advance of his army, and also commissioned some one to go to the tribe of Ghiftan to demand their assistance in this crisis; and they came with a thousand lion warriors, and Antar's nephew Hatal, whom the king left to protect the women and property.

As to Prince Aswad, he was marching with armies over the desert, when a ferocious lion, of the size of a bull and bigger, crouched among the rocks, appeared before them, roaring and bellowing at the troops: the men retreated from its presence, and the warriors stood still. The troops continued at a halt till Prince Aswad arrived with the rear of the army, and inquired what was the matter? they told him a lion was in front of them. Ye filth, he cried in a violent passion, has all this consternation seized you on account of a lion, the veriest dog of the waste and wilds? How will you encounter men, or contend with heroes in the field of battle? He had not finished his harangue, when a youth, in whom shone the tokens and evidences of intrepidity, started forth against the lion. He was one of the sons of Bekir, son of Wayil: he made towards the lion, having first thrown away his armour and corslet,

till he remained in his plain clothes with short sleeves; he tucked them up to his shoulder, and twisting his skirts round his girdle, he unsheathed his broad sword, and brandished it in his hand, and stalked away towards the lion, his heart harder than a rock of flint; and when he came nigh, he gave a terrific shout, which the lion hearing, he opened his mouth like a grappling iron, and clenched his fangs like a vice, and then collecting himself, as if it were into a third of his real size, he sprang at him like a flash of lightning. As soon as the youth was aware of his intent, he nerved his arm, he strengthened his wrist, and smote the lion with his sword between the eyes; the sword continued to work through till it issued forth between his thighs, and the lion fell cut in twain. The youth returned to his arms, and put on his corslet, when lo! the satraps of Prince Aswad encompassed him, and ordered him to appear in his presence. Amazed at his courage, he inquired his descent and parentage, and who were his Arab connexions? O prince, said the youth, I am called Jerrah, the Wayilite; and I came to offer my services to you, hearing of your munificence, and that you required the attendance of all the warriors from every tribe: I am at your commands, that I may show you what may gratify your sight. Aswad smiled, and ordered him an honorary robe: he also presented him some generous steeds, but Jerrah refused the robe and horses, at which Aswad being exceedingly moved, Eh! young man, said he, I perceive you refuse my favours and my robe; if

you think the donation small, we will greatly enlarge it. O noble prince, cried Jerrah, kissing the ground, and praying for him, I shall have done nothing in your presence to merit this bounty unless I can hurl at your feet the head of Antar, son of Shedad, in quest of whom these troops are marching. But who is this camel-tender, that you should on his account assemble these armies and warriors? O youth, exclaimed Aswad, vastly gratified, and smiling in joy, if you perform your engagement I will make you a prince to rule over all your Arabs. The youth kissed Aswad's hand and retired. O prince, exclaimed Locait, son of Zararah, this youth has engaged for himself to slay Antar; I engage to kill King Cais and all his brothers. After him came forward the Brandisher of Spears, the knight of the tribe of Aamir, and promised to slay all the families of Zeead and Carad. The joy and the smiles of Prince Aswad were greatly heightened at these words. O noble Arabs, said he, and I too engage myself to you to give fifty dinars to every one who shall bring me a head of those vile Absians.

Thus marched the warriors, promising and expressing their obligations; and they continued travelling over the country and mountains in their way to the land of Abs, till they reached a place called the land of Mesalik, an extensive waste, and fraught with dangers; and when they came nigh to the spot they beheld tents and dwellings, and spears and swords, and horses and chargers. And these were the heroes lying in wait for Prince Aswad;

for King Cais, when he quitted home, having sent on forward the thousand horsemen, marched after them, and he chanced to meet Cosoorah, Harith's brother, on the road, who saluting him and kissing his hand, thanked him for the protection he had granted to his brother Harith. They continued their march till they reached this place, where they had remained three days, and on the fourth came up Prince Aswad and his armies, and beheld the Absians, who had anticipated him. He ordered his troops to halt, saying, Let us send to the Absians a messenger, that we may hear what King Cais has to say for himself: if he delivers up Harith, it is well; otherwise we will attack him with these armies, which are like the tempestuous seas. Accordingly he sent a letter to the Absians by a court messenger, who repaired with it to the Absians, and the first person he met was the Chief Antar, who conducting him to King Cais, snatched the letter from him, and gave it to the King, who opened it, and read it, and it began thus: Know, O Cais, that my brother, whose command is to be obeyed in every quarter, and under whose subjection you have been exalted, thus says, if you wish to accommodate this business, and to be thanked for all your actions, deliver up to him Harith, son of Zalim, and make the excuses of a repentant sinner before your horsemen are obliged to fly. Know also, that this army, with which I am, is only the advance of the grand army, which is following us like the gushing springs. So agree to this proposal, and be not obstinate and re-

fractory, or perils will light upon you. Health to him who obeys and is peaceable, but curses on him who rebels and makes disturbances! Were this proposal such as we could accept, said Cais to the messenger, it would be well; but know, O Arab, we are a tribe that having once given their words, follow it up with their actions; and when we have granted our protection to any one, we secure him against the events of day and night. Now we have engaged ourselves to this man, who retaliated for us on Khalid, son of Giafer, and never can we withhold our protection from him till our heads fly off before him. But say to your prince, whose armies are following him, that this is a point we fear not and dread not. Return to him, and tell him to renounce his rapacity, and not to expose himself to destruction and death; and let him repent of what he has done. When Antar heard the letter and the answer, he repented of having let the messenger escape in safety; but the man slunk away, his senses in a state of bewilderment. He knew not what to say till he stood before Aswad, where he shook in terror, and kept looking behind, repeating to him the words he had heard. What's behind thee? said the prince, thou foul-mustachioed fellow! wherefore dost thou turn about, right and left? O prince, said he, behind me is violent death and every figured evil, all comprised in that accursed slave Antar. By the faith of an Arab, O prince, had not King Cais kept him off, he would have destroyed me in the most dreadful of deaths; and now indeed I

should say that he was close behind me listening to my discourse. Upon this, Aswad smiled from his heart of rage and passion. Verily, folly and rapacity have entered these fellows' brains, he cried; remonstrance has no effect on them, and never will they feel the value of their lives till the chargers play over their heads.

It was now evening; so they reposed that night till day dawned, when the prince mounted at the door of his pavilion; they elevated above his head the banners and ensigns, and the armies and nations rolled on like waves. Prince Aswad had resolved on drawing up his troops in right and left wings, but the rapacious Absians gave him not time, for they had mounted before the rising of the sun, eager for the battle and combat. Amongst the foremost was the Chief Antar, and Harith, who was a blazing flame, with the horsemen of Marah, and his brother Cosoorah. 'March with me, said Harith to his brother, that we may attack the left; and I, said Antar, will assail the right. They attacked, and their comrades cast their lives into perils and horrors. Upon this, shouted the armies of Irak; and the wilds and the wastes were agitated at their clamour. The Absian army appeared contemptible in their eyes, and their minds assured them of conquest; so they flowed down like the tempestuous seas, and at their head was Locait, like a hovering eagle, with his shouts and his roars; also the Brandisher of Spears attacked with the Aamirites. The convulsion became more furious; the mountains

tottered; the scimitars laboured against backs and kidnies; the doors of the sepulchres were opened, and the decrees of the all-powerful Monarch descended upon them; the clouds of dust mounted on high from the trampling of hoofs; the winners were distinguished from the losers; the portion of the brave was the most abundant. Horsemen rushed upon horsemen; the sword and spear were at work amongst heads and bodies; hands were exhausted; equals contended; heroes and warriors mangled each other; the field was too confined; the intoxicated were sobered; perseverance exerted itself; artifice and fraud availed not. Fierce were the blows of the crossing instruments; the brave were hurled from their saddles. God prospered that memorable day, defending those whose bodies were cased in iron: God prospered Antar and the generous Absians in their slaughter of hundreds and of thousands! As to Harith, he cut through the people and the nations, for he was a man of sorely-wounded spirit; so he fought with the fiercest resolution; he hacked through the armies in his highly roused ardour. But though we have already mentioned his intrepidity, and force, and superiority, nothing could have carried him through those dreadful scenes but his sword Zoolhyyat; and his brother almost equalled him in courage and steadiness; and had it not been for the numbers of the foe not one could have stood firm against him; for how great the difference between the wolf and the sheep, and between foxes and the lions of the forests! Before

midday blood flowed and streamed; heroes complained of calamities and sorrows, and what was before in order was now all in confusion; the form of death was conspicuous, and prowled about; cups were poured out of the wine of death; the sword continued to labour, and blood to gush forth, and men to slay, and the fire of battle to blaze, till evening came on; then had Antar massacred the right with his assaults; he never flagged; and as he retired with his uncles, his sword was drenched in the blood of horsemen, and he had appeased his heart among them in blows and thrusts. Thus also Oorwah, with his firmness and superiority in arms, and the other horsemen. Harith too, with his brother Cosoorah, retired, making their way through the left till they reached the tents. Darkness having thrown its veil over the land, Prince Aswad too retired, but he would not even look at any one, for he had that day seen terrifying horrors; he had beheld warriors who feared not death, and who scorned to yield. When he alighted at his tent, he assembled his people, and reproached them for their combat, exclaiming, This is not the battle by which we shall succeed in our objects; our disorders will not thus be cured. The Absians are less than six thousand men, and we amount to forty thousand strong-limbed warriors; but they have routed our heroes, and particularly that overpowering slave, whom fire cannot effect; he alone discomfited the right, and slew the standard-bearer, and had it not been for the approach of night he would have assaulted me

beneath the banners; and also that Harith, whom we are come to seek, he alone cut through the left; and these are circumstances I did not expect. There is that tribe of Fazarah too, on which I depended; I have no news of them; I should say, they had forfeited my relationship, as the Absians have forfeited the relationship of my brother. Moreover, if they thus resist us, they will mangle our reputation, and will overthrow our glory; our heroes will be slaughtered; our horsemen be scattered over the wilds, and no one will have any respect for us; and behold, they have not fulfilled their engagements; those horsemen I mean, who made such fine promises. O dread King, said Loçait, be not distressed; harass not your mind; to-morrow's night the Absians shall not pass but as your captives. Our projects against Antar and the dastardly Absians must succeed, for the warriors who promised the destruction of the tribe of Abs did not take part in the engagement; they smote not, neither did they thrust. Conceal your feelings till to-morrow, and you shall see what will gratify your heart; and when they display their courage in your presence, they will merit your honorary robes and your favours.

At hearing this, the heart of Aswad was consoled, and his passion and fury relented: he dissolved the assembly, and comforted himself. As to the tribe of Abs and Adnan, when they returned to the tents, they searched for the killed and wounded; the former amounted to fifty-one, and

the latter to a hundred and seventy; but they heard from some one, that of the armies of Irak were slain three thousand and odd: they were delighted, and King Cais feeling sure that he had gained a victory: O my cousins, said he, my heart prompts me, we shall defeat the foe were they even as numerous as the sands of the desert, notwithstanding the slaughter of our horsemen, whose equals the age cannot produce. We form but a small tribe, yet to me one of our horsemen is more valuable than a whole tribe. O King, said Antar, calm your mind and brighten your eye, to-morrow I will exhibit death to them. I am aware they will to-morrow challenge me to the fight. O Abool-fawaris, said Harith, I will not permit you to do any thing of the sort, till I and my brother have drunk of the cup of death. This is a point, said Antar, that can only be decided to-morrow, and every one that is called out by name must start forth to the contest. In this guise they reposed till day dawned, when the armies being in battle array, the first that sought the plain was Jerrah, the Wayilite, for Prince Aswad had ordered his officers to prevent the tribes from attacking in a body. Jerrah charged and galloped over the field of battle, manœuvring upon the back of his swift horse, till the wits of the wisest were confounded; and as he advanced towards the Absians; Tribe of Abs, he cried out in a loud voice, by the faith of an Arab, ye are the horsemen of destruction and instant death; were it not so, ye would not oppose

the kings of the age, ye being so few in numbers. Do ye intend to encounter these armies and warriors? Foul play would proceed from a deficiency in liberality and evil dispositions; but to attack you is the triumph of every noble exertion for one who aims at eminence and honour by the blow of the sword and the thrust of the spear. Let your black knight come forth against me, he, your illustrious warrior, who has raised for you a strong tower of glory. None will reproach his dark complexion, but those who cannot cope with him, those who hate or envy him. I think meanly of every one, notwithstanding his forefathers and progenitors. I acknowledge no honour, but in him who thrusts with the long spear in the scene of action and battle. So send forth against me Antar, that I may exhibit through him a memorable contest; for I have promised to slay him in the presence of Prince Aswad, and to bring down sorrow and misery upon him; and Jerrah thus recited:

"The parentage of the brave is his words and "his acts, his resolution in the day of encounter, "and his style of combat. Cowardice renders the "youth contemptible, although his maternal and "paternal uncles may be of the race of Hashem. "Patience in the day of spear-thrusts is the glory "that will endure, however circumstances may have "reduced him: not every one that wields a sword "in his hand, and labours for high honours, attains "them; but he who plunges into the sea of dust, "and braves the flame of the raging contest that

" destroys his limbs. So soothe my heart with " the contest, and approach me, hero, whose " death is at hand; for ever will I destroy men in " the fight, and this day shall his limbs be mangled. " They have a slave indeed, whose deeds are famed, " whose acts are celebrated in every land. This " day I will erase his name with my sword, whose " terror scatters wide the crowded enemies."

Jerrah had not finished, when Antar stood before him; he roared in his voice like thunder in a cloud, and attacked him. Antar was about to reply to him in some extempore lines, but his thoughts were confused, so he rushed at him. The youth received him as the parched earth the first of the rain. These two fierce heroes turned upon each other like voracious wild beasts, and a combat took place between them that sickened the eyeballs and amazed the stoutest hearts; whilst thick dust arose above them, till it concealed them from the sight. When the Brandisher of Spears saw Antar stand forth against the youth, and occupied in the engagement, he challenged another to the plain, and he was followed by the other ten heroes, who had made high promises in the presence of Aswad, thus taking advantage of Antar's absence. When Harith saw the Brandisher of Spears come forth, with the ten horsemen, imagining they intended to outrage Antar, and being afraid that some peril or accident might befal him, he advanced also, followed by his brother Cosoorah, like a blazing flame. He wielded Zoolhyyat in his hand, and cried out to the Brandisher of

Spears, That is a deed of thine, son of Malik, which will be repaid with death! How darest thou to outrage a man engaged with his antagonist, after he had called him out by his name? May God curse the entrails that bore thee, and the cuckolds of thy kindred, said the Brandisher of Spears, there is no treachery but what proceeds from thy nature and disposition, and wert thou not in need of the tribe of Abs, thou wouldst have betrayed them even yesterday, but they are not yet secure from thy atrocities. And when thou art slain, thou wilt ever be known to every one that moves and halts by thy infamous deeds: for thou didst kill the Chief of the tribe of Aamir when he was asleep; thou didst murder Shirjibeel, King Numan's son, quite an infant, and thy evil omen is over the high and low; but we are come forward to execute our promise, for which we have pledged ourselves.

And he repeated the names of the horsemen. Harith only laughed; O Gheshm, said he, this engagement proves thy little wit; for I do not see that thou hast promised to slay me, knowing as thou dost, that I am his greatest enemy; and it was in the private apartments of his brother that I slew Khalid, son of Giafer; and I slew also his son Shirjibeel; but I do not know whether thou hast omitted to engage to kill me through fear of me, or out of contempt for me. Know, O Harith, said the Brandisher of Spears, thou didst not occur to the mind of any one, for we did not suppose that thou wert with the Absians; but we thought that thou wert

returned to thy desolation amongst the mountain-tops. Thou art right, replied Harith, and thou hast not advanced but what is perfectly true. But I intend this day to dye my sword in your blood, and to destroy ye all, high and low, and to avert your vexations from the tribe of Abs.

And he rushed upon the Brandisher of Spears, and Cosoorah assailed the Aamirite horsemen. The Semherian spears were extended; the dust sprang up from the hoofs of the Arab steeds, and calamities fell upon them. Antar bellowed at the horses to drive them far from the contest; he made an assault at the Brandisher of Spears, with the rush of an illustrious warrior. He grasped the rings of his corslet and breast-plate, and taking him prisoner, threw him down to Shiboob, who bound down his arms, and tied fast his shoulders.

The battle continued to rage, and blood to flow, and the flame of war to burn, till evening came on, when the armies quitted the contest. Antar had made about two hundred prisoners that day, whom Shiboob pinioned one after another, but those that resisted him he slew.

When Prince Aswad alighted at his tent, behold, a black, tall, lanky slave presented himself. He had every appearance of having performed a long journey, and travelled in haste; he kissed the earth, and did obeisance. Who art thou, Arab born? asked Aswad. My lord, said he, I am one of the slaves of Hadifah, Chief of the tribe of Fazarah: he has sent me to you to congratulate you on what he has done

to your enemy the tribe of Abs, and the miseries and woes he has brought down upon them; for after their expedition against you, he surprised the dwellings, with the warriors of Fazarah. He plundered their property, and slew their men, and captured their women; and by to-morrow's dawn he will join you. He has sent me to you with this message: disperse in separate divisions your army now surrounding the Absians, that they may not fly elsewhere; for he is afraid of the escape of Antar and Harith, who hereafter may still occasion us fresh trouble. Thus may success attend us!

The Prince jumped up, and stood erect in the fulness of the joy he felt; but never was this incident forgotten by him. He ordered his men to draw off the horsemen from the tribe of Abs and Adnan on all four sides, into the wilds and wastes, and in less than an hour they were scattered over the desert, and he himself mounted with those that remained about him, and marched on till he came nigh unto the tents of the Absians, where he concealed himself. Return, O Arab born, to thy master, said he to the slave-messenger, and tell him we have obeyed his directions.

Now the slave who concerted that plan, and dispersed the armies of Aswad over the barren waste, was the lion Shiboob. For when the troops alighted in the tents, O my cousins, said King Cais, my opinion is we should surprise Aswad's army under the night; perhaps we may disperse his army over the desert and waste. Shiboob was present in at-

tendance on his brother Antar: O my brother, said he, if you will hear what I have to say, I will most certainly disperse the armies, mighty and extensive as they are, and you shall catch Aswad himself in his own pit, and defeat his troops and armies. May God bless thee, O Shiboob! cried the Absian chiefs, if thou canst effect such an enterprise.

At the moment, Shiboob sprang forth to his portmanteau, and putting on some clothes suitable to stratagem, he ran away, and in an hour returned and told his brother and King Cais what he had done. Now surprise Aswad, said he; he is now in such a particular spot, and has only a small party with him.

King Cais ordered them to prepare the warlike instruments, and before midnight they were on horseback. King Cais sent for Harith, and attached to him one thousand men, and sent him to the left. As to Oorwah, he stationed him with one thousand men to the right: Do you, said he to Antar, assault the centre, my cousin. The King himself mounted with the remainder of the warriors, accompanied by Antar's nephew, with whom he brought up the rear. As to Aswad, he had concealed himself with his men, and dispersed his troops, and every one dismounted and slept near him. Suddenly screams came upon them, and the blow of the murderous scimitars, and the thrust of the calamitous spears surprised them. The armies were aghast, and their senses were disordered. Every one started from his sleep and drew his sword; every one fell upon him

who was before him. Bewildered by sleep, and terrified at the dreadful Antar and the noble Absians, they attacked each other with the edge of the sword, but they knew not whom to address, or whom to strike. Base cowards! cried out Antar at the head of the Absians, I am Antar, son of Shedad. No sooner did they hear the voice of Antar, the dauntless hero, than despair, and misery, and woe fell upon them; brave warriors were slain in the very spots where they fought, till every horseman thought wherever he turned, there was the voice of the lion Antar.

Aswad withdrew his troops; they not only withdrew, but dispersed in confusion over the waste. His only resource was to wheel about and fly, but he had not proceeded far, when Oorwah and his men encountered him, and surrounding him, were about to kill him, but he cried out for quarter, discovering himself to them, and demanding protection; on which they made him dismount from the back of his horse, and took him prisoner, dragging him along abject and miserable.

The contest continued to rage, and blood to be spilt, and the flame of war to blaze, till Shiboob, seeing how easy the business had become, mounted to the top of a sand-hill, and making himself as one of Aswad's followers, cried out with a loud voice, O Absians, grant us quarter and protection; withdraw from us the blow of the sword: no one but Aswad forced us against ye, and him ye have taken prisoner. Let us retire; relieve us from this fear

and tribulation. On hearing these words, Aswad's troops dispersed among the wastes; and there was not one who looked at another whilst Antar and Harith pursued them, till they had cleared the whole country of them; when they returned to the scattered horses and dispersed arms: and having collected the tents and property, they halted, exulting in their victory and conquest.

The next day they assembled the prisoners, amongst whom were Locait, and the Brandisher of Spears—in all, about fifty of the most celebrated Arab leaders, and their most renowned knights, with whom they set out on their return home, rejoicing in the defeat of the enemy, and their dispersion over the wilderness.

They travelled on till the following morning, and about mid-day there appeared some of their own friends, advancing from the direction of their country, and hastening over the plain in the most miserable plight, their ears cut off, their bodies besmeared with blood, and shrieking out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! haste to us, and retaliate! till they came into the presence of King Cais. Know, O King, said they, that Hadifah, after your departure, surprised us one day with five thousand horse; he not only slew our men, plundered our property, and rescued the hostages that were with us, but he massacred four hundred youths of our children, from the age of five to ten, whom he dragged forward one after the other, as he cried out to them, Now call out for some one to rescue you from death! and

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then made each in turn a mark for his arrow. He captured our women and our families, and is now gone to his own country. The cause of this was Hadifah's wife, who, observing her husband slack in the cause of retaliation, one day appeared before him, when he was seated with the chiefs of Fazarah. She was bare-headed, and her hair dishevelled. Son of Bedr, she cried, restore me to my family and my native land, for I want no coward husband; and she thus recited:

"May the curse of God light on the coward!
"May he never give thee to drink of the moisture
"of rain; may the rain-clouds never extend their
"bounty to the lands of his tribe! may they never
"robe his deserts in verdure! Thou hast clothed
"thyself, son of Bedr, in garments of infamy, that
"can never change their ignominious effect; and
"were it not for this disgrace, my eyelids would
"be ulcered with tears. Cais has involved us in
"woe for a youth; were they to weigh all Abs
"against him, he would equal them. He has
"moreover slain the Chieftains of Bedr, and has
"made the Semherian spears drink of their blood.
"Never, never, will my tears cease; my sorrows,
"my afflictions, are endless. How many miserable
"women like me, in the tribe, are mourning in woe!
"Rise then, seek the land of thy enemy; fear not—
"their defender is absent—leave not one alive among
"them, and let not their screams keep thee away from
"them. The Absians have indeed spilt your blood;
"so drive away their camels, and capture their

" wives; for your blood is noble, and generous, " and high-priced to those that purchase it. But " ye, sons of Bedr, my cousins, ye are brave, the " most illustrious of men; be therefore like the " progenitors that are gone, the forefathers that " are passed away, and let their glory live for " ever."

These verses were called the " Exciters of Sorrow." When Hadifah heard his wife's address, To arms! to arms! my cousins, he cried, and before midday, he was surrounded by five thousand well-armed horsemen. Hadifah mounted Ghabra, and the horsemen followed him. The Sheikhs endeavoured to prevent this treachery and perjury; but said Sinan, What is this? How? The Absians are absent, the women have no protector—no one to defend them, and this tribe are in duty bound to wreak their vengeance. What greater advantage can accrue from such oaths? Thus Hadifah, and the tribe of Fazarah, travelled on till they reached the tribe of Abs and Adnan, whom they attacked on all sides, and when the Ghiftanians saw what the Fazareans were doing, they plunged themselves into corslets and breastplates, consisting, as we mentioned, of two thousand men, all harsh-featured lions: they fought that day, and the next, even till the fourth day, when the tribe of Ghiftan being routed, Hadifah, with his Fazareans, gained possession of the Absian tents, and their property, and their daughters, and their children, and having rescued their hostages, they massacred four hundred children of

the tribe of Abs, all boys, from five to ten years old, making them marks for their arrows. As he returned home, his wife met him, and she beat the Absian women with a whip, and abused them, thus relieving her own heart. Hadifah put all the property apart, saying to his surrounding warriors, We must not divide this property yet, till we see what Aswad will do to the tribe of Abs. But Hadifah had scarcely finished this sentence, when lo! a dust obscured the land, and when it cleared, there came forth the warriors of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and Antar at their head, like a furious lion. The cause of their coming was the men whom they met, as we mentioned, who told them what Hadifah had done. The Absians screamed, in agony of woe and distress, for the men and children that had been massacred. King Cais assembled the prisoners, and delivered them over to Harith, saying, These are thy enemies: take them, and precede us to our country, whilst we march against the tribe of Fazarah, for thou canst not fight Hadifah, on account of your relationship. So he sent with him a party of Absians, and took the remainder with him, and departed, a flame burning in his heart, and he thus addressed them:

"Prepare, ye heroes, implements of war; this "point can only be settled with arms; your little "ones have been massacred—it is a disgrace upon ye; "but it is unavoidable. Hadifah! mayst thou never "drink a drop of liquid! may the rains of the desert "never moisten thee! thou hast indeed made a war

" against us that would choke a Sheikh, as if with " poisoned water. But I am now mounted on a " steed, that surpasses the lightning and the winds " in speed, one hindfoot white, black-haired, broad- " faced, whose forehead resembles the first burst of " dawn. O my cousins, all my joys are crushed on " your account, whilst you groan in pain of wounds. " As to my life, I regard it not, when the thick tears " of grief stream down my cheeks. Behind me are " chiefs of the race of Abs, waving long spears in " their hands—warriors irresistible—generous—in " the exposure of their lives they flinch not. Come " on, then! shed the blood of the sons of Beder, with " the cleaving scimitar."

As soon as Cais had finished, pride rushed like a blast into their heads; they hastened on, till they came nigh to the tribe of Fazarah, who no sooner ascertained they were Absians, than they were confounded and bewildered. Now then, my cousins, cried Hadifah, come on, here is your hated foe. Spring upon them in the contest, otherwise they will exterminate ye—they will ravage your property, and capture your wives, Men soon met men, and warriors warriors—blood flowed and streamed—limbs were hewn off—horrible were the scenes of peril; the convulsions were tremendous—men were precipitated on the plain of battle. King Cais attacked in person, and made the carnage rage against his kindred. Hands were extended to grasp the objects of their wishes, but did not all succeed. Calamities smote the tribes of Abs and Fazarah, whilst King

Cais exclaimed, Cousins, whomsoever the hand touches, slay not; let us deliver them all to the mothers of the children, whom Hadifah killed with his arrows. At that time, above four hundred of the Fazareans had been already slain on the field of battle; but when they heard this harangue, the Absians only exerted themselves to take prisoners. Antar on that day performed achievements to be recorded, on account of the murder of his friend Malik. At last, the Absians forced the Fazareans into their tents; there they slaughtered about a thousand horsemen, and took five hundred more, rescuing their own wives, and all their property, and they returned, exulting in having retaliated. But when they were settled, King Cais delivered to the mothers of the children four hundred prisoners, taking for himself one hundred to murder, in retaliation for his own son; and he directed all the women, each to repair to her prisoner, and to torture him the whole night; and, in the morning, to drag him forth between the hostile ranks, and murder him, in retaliation for her child. Each took charge of her respective prisoner, and she passed the night inflicting the severest torments, till the crow cawed. As to the tribe of Fazarah, they retired to their tents, repenting of what they had done. Hadifah alighted, gnawing his hands in contrition, as he said to his brothers, I have no other anguish in my heart, but in not having succeeded against the Absians. Tomorrow will I start forth to the contest, and I will appease my whole heart among them. I will suc-

ceed in my hopes, or I will drink of the cup of death and perdition. Then he wept, and his brothers too wept; and as he wept, What mean these tears and alarms? said Sinan; soon will come the armies of King Numan, who will extirpate the tribe of Abs. And know, O Hadifah, the Absians have only fought with such fury, on account of your massacre of their children, and your plunder of their property, and the capture of their wives and families. Fortune consists of two days. As to the prisoners, redeem them with cattle, or by war and battle. O Sinan, said Hadifah, as to the prisoners, not one will be released, but after a contest that will turn infants gray, and frighten the stoutest warriors; if indeed they escape beheading to-morrow. But I should now like to know what has happened between the Absians and Prince Aswad. He immediately sent for one of the prisoners he had that day taken, and to his inquiries, the Absian told him how Aswad and fifty chiefs had been captured, and that they were sent home with Harith. Hadifah shuddered, and was stupefied. Disgraced are the Arab chiefs, by the violence of this black slave, whose obstinacy and fury are incontrollable, exclaimed Hadifah, and by the outrages of that treacherous tribe of Abs. Now then, the destruction of the tribe of Fazárah is at hand. And they remained in this state till, as the day dawned, the two armies mounted, and the armour and brilliant mail glittered. King Çais mounted beneath the banners and standards, and ordered the women to appear, who came,

each dragging her prisoner by the chin. He commanded them to slay them, and thus to wreak their vengeance. Immediately every woman led out her captive in front of the two armies; she made him lie down between the two ranks, and slaughtered him, cutting him across the jugular vein, like the slaughter of a sheep, whilst her husband assisted her in the deed; and when all the four hundred warriors were massacred, King Cais ordered his slaves to murder the hundred warriors, in retaliation for his own son. Hadifah and the chieftains of Fazarah were on horseback, viewing the fate of their cousins. Their affliction was intense, and there was not one but dismounted from his horse, and taking off his rustic clog from his feet, dashed it down on his head, till he shook out all his double teeth. The news reached the wives of the murdered, and they rushed out, overwhelmed with anguish. Upon that, the tribe of Fazarah brandished their spears and their swords. The Absians received them on the barbs of their long lances, and cut through them with their polished scimitars. It was a day to frighten the senses—lives were dearly sold—evening and morning appeared the same—shouts were raised on high—the morrow and the dawn were annihilated. Lives were plundered from bodies, and the resolute warrior cried out, Flinch not from the battle and the contest! All was exertion—no jest. The Absians made one universal shout, What a glorious morn! The Fazareans stood firm with their bold countenances. How many heroes fled from the fight and

sought the wilds and the waste! blood streamed and flowed—the whole army was covered with wounds, and between them lasted an action whose like had never occufred at that period, and amongst the many descriptions of it are the following lines:

"I have braved fortune, experienced and wise. "I have endured calamities all my life long, but "never saw I so hostile a day. I never felt from "any one a severer misfortune than that Absian "contest, when they assaulted the sons of Beder. "The tribes were exterminated on that terrific day, "that might be considered as a thousand months of "time. I saw the cloud of their dust, and the "gleaming flash of their swords and spears. How "many heroes I beheld prostrate, struggling with "their feet as the horses passed over them! How "many youths I heard beneath the black columns "of sand, uttering groans that bewildered my faculties! But had it not been for the Absian slave, who "encountered the Fazarean troops in every direction, who destroyed the heroes with the Redeinian "spear, as the horses of the sons of Beder rushed "upon him, and slaughtered the enemy with the "sabres, with a heart cut out of the solid rock!!— "God prospered the noble slave, who overthrew a "thousand freeborn in the combat, and when he "wielded his sword in the day of battle, the heroes "might be seen tumbling down before him."

At the close of the day, the two parties alighted at their respective tents. King Cais then consulted with Antar, about sending the property and families

to the land of Shurebah and Mount Saadi. Do as you please, O king, said Antar. Accordingly, he gave them an escort of one hundred horsemen, under his brother Harith. Conduct your mother, said he, and the rest of the women home, and remain with Harith, son of Zalim, for I will not quit the tribe of Fazarah till I extirpate every vestige of them, and leave no record of them. Antar, indeed, had resolved to take charge of them, but King Cais would not permit him; so he remained behind, that he might incur no blame or reproach; and Harith departed with the property and families. As to the Fazareans, they halted at their tents, and more than a third of them had been slain. What say you? said Sinan to Hadifah, shall I go to your brother-in-law, Harith, son of Zalim, and throw myself on his mercy? Perhaps he will now fight for us, or, at any rate, make peace for us. No, that will not do, said Hadifah. They continued in conversation till, the darkness having disappeared, Hadifah descended into the plain, and as he came nigh to the standards of King Cais, O son of Zoheir, he cried, the wager was between thee and me. The affair indeed is gone too far, and we have put on the garments of treachery and outrage, for thou hast slain my son, and thy slave slew my brother; I slew thy brother, and it was I who ordered the blow against thy horse. The other day I slew the infants, and you, in their stead, have slain as many men. It is not liberal, that we should permit the women to complain of us; but let us terminate this affair with our

lives, till one of us be dead: thus will all anxiety and doubt be at an end; one of us will succeed, and let the survivor reign over the whole land. Come on then, I will attack thee, and never will I desist till thou hast destroyed me, or I have destroyed thee; and Hadifah thus recited:

"Fortune disregards all respect and engagement;
"ofttimes she cajoles us and favours the coward.
"In our fathers we are glorified, and from our fore-
"fathers we are made heirs to glory and supremacy.
"I have built a mansion of glory, sublime on high,
"with spears that make no distinction between
"sacred and profane; with swords with which we
"encounter horrors and the calamities of the age.
"At all times the cleaving sword is my protection;
"the sword whose edge fractures bones. I have
"granted wealth to the poor, and never withheld
"it, and never have I heard reproach. I have par-
"doned where I have been able; in my decisions
"I have been impartial; I have never broken my
"engagements. But I know fortune is a niggard;
"its disposition is perfidious, and it owns no no-
"bility. If joy has its day, and should it even last
"awhile, the hand of misfortune will turn it into
"sorrow for a year. So be impartial to me in the
"combat; charge; behold my resolution when the
"battle rages, for we have left the women wild with
"grief, dashing their hands against their cheeks and
"sleepless."

When King Cais and his brothers heard these verses, they were afraid the Arabs would regard

them with the eye of inferiority; so King Cais started forth, mounted on the back of his horse, and thus spoke:

"If thou art in want of compassion, I will confess on some occasions I travel in the paths of "weakness. I have a steed for mercy bitted with "mercy, and I have a horse for folly saddled with "folly. With him who challenges my resolution I "am straight; and for him who would make me "swerve aside I am crooked. Thou hast outraged "us, son of Beder; and the deed by which thou "hadst conquered is more odious than all that is "most vile; taste, then, the chastisement of violence "before thou drinkest of the cup of death that is "impregnated with poison. I have taken captive "him whose aid ye required. I have returned with "him, and the flame of war increases, and is kindled "anew. We are all lion horsemen, all brave heroes "crowned with glory."

King Cais rushed upon Hadifah, who met him as the parched earth the first of the rain, both expressing the deep resentment rankling in their hearts. In less than an hour they both vanished from the sight, and the dust thickened over them. There was not one in the two armies but prepared for the combat, fearful lest death should overtake their leaders. Hadifah, before he attacked King Cais, had already enjoined his brothers, saying, When you see me drawing King Cais towards you, rush at him and slay him, and let the Arabs abuse us to eternity. He thus purposely kept retiring till

he came close to his brothers, who immediately attacked, and attempted to put Cais to death. But when Antar saw this treason on the part of the Fazareans, he assailed them, shouting at them in a voice like thunder in a cloud, and they instantly retreated from the scene of action. Antar advanced, and thus exclaimed:

"I am the son of Shedad, truly the knight of the "Arabs, and the reliever of grievances with the "sharp edge of my sword: The atmosphere is "dust-darkened; the whole region is obscured in "sand-clouds; the light of the sun is veiled; the "dust-wave is on high; warriors charge and ap-"proach the scene where death will be quaffed; the "horses neigh, and the horsemen charge, and the "earth is convulsed at the excess of horrors; it is "a day to turn every hero old, and no one braves "it but the valiant. I have stood firm in it with a "heart that knows no tardiness; conscious of no "fear or alarm. I have plunged into it, and the "dust of death pours over my noble steed, ambling "as he goes. Every eye beholds me and is bewil-"dered; they approach me, and they are repaid with "death. There is no virtue in the act where death "is not at hand, nor is there any exaltation of soul "to be recorded in history. My parentage is "known amongst the noblest of the creation, for "my resolution, my vigilance, my virtues, and my "superiority."

Having finished, he rushed upon the tribe of Fazarah; he put them to confusion; he cleft down

their horsemen, singly and in pairs, till he came up to King Cais and Hadifah, whom he saw clinging to each other like one individual; he rushed at them, and dispersing those that surrounded them, he thrust at Hadifah with his spear, and hurled him from the back of his horse on the ground, and brought forth King Cais from the battle, whilst the Absians turned upon the Fazareans, and let down infamy and ruin upon them. They took four hundred prisoners, and two of Hadifah's brothers; and they continued this cruel work till evening came on, when they retired to their tents. As soon as darkness had veiled the earth, behold, three horsemen arrived out of the hundred whom King Cais had sent with Harith, son of Zalim, to guard the prisoners.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Eh! what has befallen you? said Cais; who among men has cast you down? Know, O king, they replied, we accompanied Harith till we reached our own country. Harith guarded the prisoners, and remained watching them three days, ever menacing them till night-fall; but one morning we looked for him and his prisoners, but we could not find either him or them; so out of our alarms for you, knowing well his perfidy, we are come to apprise you. Cais shuddered at this intelligence; And did this event, asked he, take place before the families arrived, or afterwards? No women, no families, no camels, no cattle, have we seen, replied they. Then the light became dark in the eyes of King Cais. Alas! then our advantages have turned out to our prejudice, he exclaimed, and these ordures of Fazareans will still exult over us. O king, said Antar, when he saw the anguish of Cais at this corroboration of the news, this fact proves indeed the difference between appearances and reality, as widely distinct are they as existence from annihilation; an experienced man can see the whole proceeding from beginning to end. I am persuaded that Aswad and his companions have ultimately engaged to procure King Numan's protection for him, and that he has agreed to their plans,

and has consequently released them from bondage; and as he was coming with them against us, he must have met our women travelling along the road (no better opportunity to open a door to the heart of King Numan could they find), they must have seized them, and they are now on their way to Hirah. King Cais was convinced of the probability of Antar's conjectures; O my cousin, said he, if it is so, truly we are fallen between two perilous catastrophes, and two deadly afflictions, and I do not comprehend which we should undertake first; for if we pursue Harith in a body the Fazareans will turn upon us, and if we remain here every vestige of us will be extirpated. O king, said Antar, it is my opinion that I go alone after Harith and his prisoners; I will rescue the property and families; I will replace Aswad himself and his comrades into chains and fetters; and I will show you what I will do with that Prince Aswad and all his people. Do you in the meanwhile stand firmly opposed to the tribe of Fazarah. Ah, my cousin, said Cais, much relieved, do as you please; but if it is so, and you really must go, take with you some one to aid you in the contest. O king, said Antar, if my heart were easy about you, I would attack every human being on the earth single-handed. But he took his nephew Hatal, and altogether ten men, on whose firmness he could rely in battle. Shiboob by his side, he sought the barren waste, followed by his warriors.

As to the tribe of Fazarah, after Hadifah and his

brothers were taken prisoners, they took to a precipitate flight, and repaired to Sinan, who exhorted them to resist till the morrow, as something would probably happen to occupy the Absians' attention. The next day there started forth from the Fazareans a sturdy warrior and an intrepid hero; he was a horseman of the dimensions of an elephant, or a towering palm-tree; he galloped, and charged, and challenging to the fight, thus exclaimed, O tribe of Abs, come forth to the spear-thrust and the sword-blow. By the faith of an Arab ye are the knights of the age, the lions of Adnan, the conquerors of the brave, and truly ye are just; on this account the God of the holy shrine has aided you, and has humbled your foes to you. We, moreover, have outraged you, and we have oppressed you, and we had no propriety in our transactions. Such indeed have been our proceedings: but you have slain our horsemen; you have hurled dead our brave heroes; and all this has fallen upon us in consequence of our massacre of your children, and our perfidious conduct towards you; and, moreover, our warriors were taken captives by you, and their outrage has been visited upon them, in the result of their infamous conduct and disgraceful actions. We were last night resolved on flight, though we are more numerous than you, and our means more abundant, but ye are more steady than us in the field of combats and contests. Now, then, all we demand of you is justice, and the abandonment of all violence and outrage, so that when you accomplish your de-

signs upon us, and possess yourselves of our property and women, our families and our wives may not have a word or a syllable to say against you, and no blame or reproach be attached to you. Come forth, then, against me, ye that desire the combat, for ye are the chiefs of Adnan, and the warriors of Hijaz. Beware of treachery, ye heroes, or the calamities nocturnal and diurnal will overwhelm ye. After this harangue the knight thus continued:

"Whoso has tried fortune, him its marvels have "terrified; into him its misfortunes have fixed their "fangs. I truly know that the results of violence "are repentance, and that its consequences will re- "quite us. There is nothing remaining for us but "to drink of the cup of death, under the dust-cloud "when the whole country is blackened. Cool then "my sickness with the spear-thrust; rush then "upon a brave man, to whom every thing is easy. "Shame has pitched her abode on him from every "direction, though once the revolutions of fortune "were his friends. Ye judges, be impartial towards "us, for we have a land whose female mourners "shriek in terror. Perhaps too the revolutions of "fortune will befriend us with its justice, and will "send down its evils upon you. Confide not in "fortune, for the age is fraught with evil; and "sorrow, as you see, may inflict its wondrous works "on you."

King Cais listened, and was exceedingly astonished at the mild tone of the warrior: his heart pitied the tribe of Fazarah, as he recollected the re-

lationship and kindred that existed between them. By the faith of an Arab, said he to those around him, were this knight anxious to make peace with us I would be reconciled to them, and forgive the blood of the children on account of the tenderness of his expressions. But it is too late: so now come on. And as to this knight who demands fair play, let him have it; and if any one of ye is able to take him prisoner, let him capture him. Upon that, the Absian warriors rushed upon him from all quarters, and although King Cais called out to them, they would not return; for their ambitious feelings were excited against that knight, who, when he saw the Absian forces making towards him, smiled conceitedly; and as he joyfully urged on his horse, Eh! Absians, he exclaimed, ye have not failed in this instance of impartiality; but this is what the strong ever do against the weak, and as he spoke he bent his head over the saddle-bow; he assaulted the Absians, and met them with dreadful sword-blows and powerful spear-thrusts. Wreaking his vengeance upon them, he cut through them with his sword, and in less than an hour he hurled down twenty of their most puissant knights. The horsemen still assailed him in every direction, and shouted at him; but he was silent and returned no answer, neither did he make any address, but he dealt his blows right and left, cleaving down the horsemen on the field of battle. The tribes stared at him and at the plain, in order to distinguish the vanquished from the vanquisher, but of that lion-hero they could only

discern the sword-blade as it glittered, and where it fell it cleft in twain, till all the warriors fled from him, and sought safety in the presence of King Cais, who eagerly asked them what that knight had done to them. On our lives, O king, they exclaimed, we never saw a more valiant fellow than this hero; he has cut down our horsemen with his scimitar, and has brought death upon us. Well, said Cais, and what is this hero's name? who is this lion? O king, we know him not, they replied; there is not one of us that can give any account of him, for never did we behold his like amongst all the warriors, or one that could equal him in the field of battle: he has already slain twenty horsemen, all lion heroes. The heart of Cais was sorely grieved; and as he listened to the acclamations of the tribe of Fazarah, his rage and anguish were more intolerable; for he felt assured those shouts were the shouts of victory. His grief and sorrow pressed heavier upon him, and he ordered his brothers and the horsemen of his tribe to make a united attack, saying, Come on to the knight who softened us to pity by his speech, and who destroys our horsemen with the edge of his scimitar. Upon this, the Absian heroes rushed upon him; they slackened their reins, and poised their spears; but they had not approached the field of contest before the enemy appeared, and the youth started forth in their rear, roaring and bellowing like thunder in a cloud, and blood was trickling from his sword edge, and death was glaring in his eyes.

The horsemen shuddered and shrunk back, whilst the Knight continued to cleave skulls, and to crush bones, till coming near the banners and standards of the King, he roared O by Marah! O by Marah! Hail, O Cais, to thy death and destruction! I am Harith, son of Zalim, the slayer of lion-warriors. And he rushed at the standard-bearer, and smote him on the head with his sword, and divided him down to the girdle of his back, and felled him cut in twain. He assaulted King Cais, and dragging him off his horse's back, took him prisoner, and delivering him over to one of his attendants, he renewed his attack.

The Fazareans rushed on to his assistance, their hearts encouraged by his intrepidity; men met men, and heroes met heroes: blood flowed and streamed; limbs were hewn asunder; warriors were stretched low upon the field of contention; the well-proportioned spears, and the cleaving blades, laboured amongst them. Heads flew off; wrists were severed; the eagles of death hovered over them. The warriors crowded round King Cais and Harith, and the market of war continued its traffic. This one died, that one escaped; the scimitars flashed; the spears stung; mails were split; lives were in agony; the ground was drenched in blood; the glories of the heroes were exalted; the flame of war increased, and numberless were the sword-blows and the spear-thrusts; the easy became arduous, and the whole scene boiled like the bubbling of a caldron. Eagles and vultures hovered over them; the coward was overthrown, and the brave vanquished. Men en-

gaged, and the horrors became still more terrific, till the day departed, and night came on in obscurity, when the two armies separating, alighted in a neighbouring spot.

The Fazareans carried off King Cais, intending to ransom Hadifah with him, and to obtain through him security after all their terrors. The cause of this was, that after King Cais had delivered over the prisoners to Harith, with an escort of one hundred men, he conducted them to the land of the Absians, where he beheld the carcasses of the dead, and the streaming of blood. The Absians cannot stand out long, said he to himself: so he pitched his tents on the sand-hills and mounds, and remained guarding the prisoners till the third day, when he went unto them, and found them consulting about the deliverance of their persons. O Harith, said Aswad, how trifling is your compliance with the times; how strange is your conduct among the horsemen! just as if thou wert only created a rock, cast down on the plain for every one to stumble against thee. What can I do? he replied: I am the horseman of horsemen and heroes. O Harith, said Locait, the cause of these disasters was your murder of Numan's son, and though you contrived to escape after all your dangers, you have persisted in your obstinacy and rebellion, and have reconciled yourself to a life with an insignificant, worthless slave; but if you have a mind to rescue Numan's brother and his companions, and to make your apologies, and demand their protection, haste then before it is too late, and

repent not of what is past, only when misfortunes befal you—so that we may engage Numan's protection for you, and your former deeds be cancelled by your subsequent conduct, and every man alive will thank you. But the Absians, said Harith, it does not become me to afflict them—but then Antar! Ah! indeed, against him my heart is sick with envy: no man's frame is more disordered than mine; for he is superior in feats of arms and horsemanship; were it not so, the Arabs would be under my control; and had I not been in want of him, I would have murdered him, and would have captured his cousin Ibla.

Prince Aswad now began to indulge hopes of success. What is it you wish? said he, that we may grant it, and engage for its fulfilment? I wish you would go with me, said Harith, to the tribe of Fazarah, and assist me in the destruction of Antar, and insure me Numan's protection. O Harith, exclaimed Aswad, who only required his liberty and return to Irak, I engage for Antar's death, were he encompassed by multitudes.

Upon this, Harith released them from bondage, and brought them arms and horses, and only waiting for the darkness of night, they set out for the land of Fazarah; and as they met the wives, and property, and families of the Absians on the road, My opinion, said Aswad, is, you should drive away these baggage-camels, and depart for King Numan before the dread Antar pursue us, and return us to captivity and infamy.

So they surrounded the baggage-camels on all

sides, and ordered the people to turn them towards the land of Irak. Who is it, said Harith, son of Zoheir, who has sent you against us? Surrender! exclaimed the Brandisher of Spears, or I will make thee dwell in thy tomb. We are the horsemen of Aamir, and with us is Harith, son of Zalim, and Prince Aswad, brother of King Numan. Thus saying, he attacked Harith, son of King Zoheir, and took him prisoner: and as the remaining horsemen saw death was in him, they wheeled round, and sought flight; but lo! in front of them were sturdy knights; so they surrendered themselves to captivity and chains; and when morning dawned, the hundred horsemen were pinioned.

Harith looked at Ibla, who was in tears, and casting her eyes round right and left, and he would have spoken to her. O Harith, said Aswad, knowing his situation, we cannot let you do such an act as that; it is impossible, till you see Antar dead. And Harith soon repented of having rescued them, as he communed with himself,—If I go to Numan, and Mootegeredah should ever hear that I have released her brother's foes, and have captured the Absian women, never will she permit her husband to give me any favourable answer: the best thing I can do, will be to go with these ordures, that I may watch my opportunity with them, and make them all drink of the cup of death; and then seize Ibla, and fly with her to some corner of the earth.

The Brandisher of Spears knew what he was about. O Prince, said he, turning to Aswad, Harith

repents of having rescued us; it will be as well to remove him from us before evening. You know, O Chief of the tribe of Marah, said Aswad to Harith, that we are now marching to the tribe of Fazarah. But I am aware, that Cais and Antar must have annihilated them. My advice is, that you join them till I send you aid from my brother Numan; for I cannot permit you to enter Irak, till Cais be led before you in fetters and chains, and the head of Antar be on the tallest of spears.

Harith knew they were afraid of him; however, he had nothing for it but to turn away his horse's head, and seek his tribe and his people. He continued his road till he reached the tribe of Fazarah, whom he informed of the release of the prisoners, and that he had sent the Absian baggage-camels to Irak; and I, he added, will consent to assist you. Sinan burst into tears in a fit of joy, and felt convinced that all was now right. Harith asked about Antar; We know nothing of him, said they.

Harith concealed himself, till ascertaining that Antar was absent, he discovered himself, and attacked the troops, and dispersed the camp, and took King Cais prisoner. But in compliance with Sinan's advice, that he should release Cais, and ransom Hadifah and his brothers, he summoned Cais, and made a covenant with him, to which Cais gave his consent, and swore he would release Hadifah and his brothers from bondage.

They accordingly set him at liberty, and he returned to the Absians, who were delighted at his

arrival, and inquired what had happened to him with the Fazareans. He ordered Hadifah and his brothers into his presence, and he gave them honorary robes, and released them: returning them their horses and their arms, he sent them home, having first asked them to make peace; but Hadifah refused. When they reached the tribe of Fazarah, their troubles diminished, and their joys increased. Sinan and Harith advanced, and saluting them, conducted them to the tents; and on that day there was no fighting.

As to the Absians, when King Cais had liberated Hadifah and his brothers, he assembled his brothers, and Rebia, and his tribe, and began to consult with them how he should conduct the war against the Fazareans. My advice, O King, said Rebia, is, that we should protract the combat; perhaps our cousin may come to us, he, the reliever of our sorrows—Antar, son of Shedad, and repay them for their outrages. We must, said Cais, make one united attack, and perhaps we may punish the iniquity of that Harith, son of Zalim. That's the thing, said the Absians.

The next day the Fazareans mounted, and sought the contest; the Absians also made an universal assault; limbs were soon cut off; the polished blades and lengthened spears laboured; heroes were laid low on the scene of horrors. The affair continued in this state till mid-day, the Fazareans being well backed against the Absians by the presence of Harith.

But lo! a dust arose, and covered the land; and

in an hour there appeared five hundred horsemen in armour, and at their head was a knight like a mass of a mountain, or the declivity of a vast rock; and he shouted out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! Retaliation for Malik, son of Zoheir! I am Zayidah, son of Museeb: then repeating his shout, he attacked the Fazareans. His men followed him to the assault, and in less than an hour they drove back the Fazareans to the tents.

When Harith saw this, he uncovered his head, and attacked till he retrieved the day by his vigorous resistance. Thus the combat continued till evening, when the two armies separated. The Fazareans alighted at their tents, and thanked Harith for his exploits: and thus also the Absians alighted at their tents, and thanked Zayidah for his achievements.

King Cais having asked Zayidah about the cause of his coming, O King, said he, I heard what had happened to you with the filthy tribe of Fazarah, and how they had massacred the children. I could not endure such deeds: I thought indeed you would have sent to require my assistance; but as no one came to me from you, I mounted with these warriors, and am here to aid you; and were it not for Harith, I would easily defeat the Fazareans. Tomorrow, however, I will challenge him; perhaps I may kill him, and relieve the Arabs from his atrocities, and his treacheries, and malice. On hearing this, King Cais reposed quite happy. As to the tribe of Fazarah, By the protection of an Arab, said Harith,

verily that Zayidah is a noble horseman, but to-morrow I must kill him.

They reposed that night, revolving under the will of the most merciful God, whom nothing human can change, till the day dawned, when the two parties having mounted to the scene of action, lo! Harith started forth, eager for the contest; and as he galloped and charged, he thus recited:

"I regard no man as a friend, and I make absence an exchange for enjoyment. Whenever a friend asks a favour of you, betray him, and requite a good action with an evil one, as a foe, and hurl down every one with the long spear. Ply the sword amongst all your relations, and slay every one with the polished sabre. Betray your companions and family, till you see the dearest in infamy. When you want a comrade, associate with a spear, and be not separated from your bright scimitar. Abandon your family, forsake friends; laid low on the back of the earth, let them lie dead. O Absians, I will singly attack you this day with deeds that ages shall record. My sword shall not rest in the darkness of its sheath, and it will not be reconciled to any one instead of me. My scimitar, and my arms, and my spear, shall tear ye out, root and branch. Think not I regard a friend that he can please me. I love no friend; come forth then, and behold the combat of a youth, a vanquisher, who considers numbers as nought; see how he will act among ye on the back of his colt that will

"trample down heroes in the day of battle. My "heart this day is sick, ease therefore my sickening "heart with the contest. I, am Harith, son of "Zalim; my name is famed for perfidy throughout "the tribes."

The Absians replied to Harith's verses with curses and abuse. Zayidah longed to attack him, but one of his cousins anticipated him; he was a stout horseman, and a noble warrior; he rushed on Harith; he stood up on his saddle; then stretched himself out on his stirrups, and drove at Harith a fierce thrust. But as Harith watched the spear aimed at his chest, he unsheathed his sword, and at one blow clipped off its point. Then he closed on him, and pierced him with his lance through the chest, and forced the barb out quivering through his back; he hurled him down dead, weltering in his blood. Again he rushed at the standards of King Cais, shouting, O Absians, this is not your custom, thus to let others fight for you; why stand ye still on the backs of your horses? Sally forth, if ye are desirous of glory. If you wish to withdraw, I will let you, on condition that ye abandon for ever the land of Shurebah and Mount Saadi. I will accommodate you among my tribe of Marah, and I will intercede for you with King Numan, provided you first send me your slave Antar bound in chains, that I may kill him, and retaliate on him, and deliver him to King Numan. On hearing this harangue, King Cais was anxious to order his army to attack, but Zayidah would not permit him, for rushing upon

Harith, he thus exclaimed, 'Eh! how foul are thy qualities! Art thou not ashamed barely to mention such odious propositions? and thus he continued:

"If thine eye regards iniquity as virtue, by my "life, thy blindness has lasted too long. If per- "fidy were to smite thee with the cleaving sword, "it would see its favourite disgraced. Thou hast "gained a name by the murder of Khalid, till thou "hast filled the unwatered deserts with the talk of "thy deeds. Thou didst go to him as he slept, "and thou didst force the polished sword against "him in the obscurity of night. But now hail to "thee! verily thou shalt taste of prolonged tor- "tures from the edge of my scimitar and the barb "of my spear."

These two intrepid heroes met like two ferocious leopards, and a contest ensued that startled the boldest, and amazed the stoutest. They continued in this state till mid-day, when they were enveloped under the dust. Harith despised his antagonist; but perceiving his uncommon powers, he exerted himself in the combat of blows and thrusts, fearful that the tribe of Fazarah should regard him with an eye of inferiority. So he assaulted Zayidah like an enraged lion, and smote him on the head, splitting his casque and his chains; the sword continued to work through him till it issued between his thighs, and he fell dead, cut in two. The Fazareans sent forth shouts of exultation, when lo! a knight advanced towards King Cais: he was close

vizored: Dost thou not know who I am? said he. No, young man, said Cais. I am Cosoorah, Harith's brother, said he, who has outraged you after all your kindness. I am resolved to go out against him myself, and, perhaps, I may relieve the Arabs from his iniquities; for greatly has he dishonoured our kindred by his acts. I wish therefore to try myself in the combat with him, and whether I am victorious over him, or he kill me, I shall be eased of his perfidy. King Cais was exceedingly astonished. These two are brothers by the same father and mother, said he to his chiefs; but what a difference is there between them in courtesy and generosity! Thus started forth Cosoorah against his brother. Eh! thou faithless villain! he exclaimed, what means this depravity? this outrage against the warriors? hast lost thy senses? or is it thy folly that goads thee on? Thou bastard! cried Harith, recognising him, and he was immediately inflamed with intense wrath and indignation, I sent after thee to come and assist me, but thou wert gone to the Absians, and fearest not my power: now thou art come even to fight me. And as he spoke, he assailed his brother with the utmost fury; but Cosoorah met him like a sparkling fire. (The Arabs, in those days of ignorance, used to call Harith the Violator, and Cosoorah the Intrepid). And they continued the spear-thrust and sword-blow till every eyeball was sickened. They continued in this state till evening came on, when Harith desisted from the engagement, saying, Return to thy comrades

for this night; had I wished thy death, I would have slain thee at the very first. By the faith of a noble Arab, said Cosoorah, thou hast no escape but by flight; if thou retirest from before me, I will pursue thee to the tribe of Fazarah, and will bring defeat down upon thee; for I only came to fight thee, because thou hast glutted the universe with the scandal thou hast brought on the Arabs. On hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of Harith. He rushed at him, and smote him with Zoolhyyat on the head, and divided him down to the belt of his back, and he hurled him over cut in twain. Confounded at Harith's deed, the two armies shuddered at the hardness of his heart against his brother, the son of his father and mother. As to King Cais, he vanished from existence at the horror of this catastrophe. He remained that night in the greatest distress at being thus abandoned by Harith, for he could not imagine what would happen, or how it would all end. As to Harith, when he had slain his brother Cosoorah, he retired to the tribe of Fazarah, where Hadifah and Sinan met him, and thanked him for his achievements, and for the murder of his brother.

At the dawn of day the two armies prepared to engage, when lo! Harith started forth galloping and charging, and challenging to the contest. Come forth, ye Absians, he cried, against the grasper of lives! him who converts joy into sorrow—him who regards no engagement—him who acknowledges no brother—no

cousin. King Cais would have ordered the troops to a general assault, but the Chief, Shedad started out against Harith, who encountered him, and commenced the blow, and the draughts of instant death: he had even wounded him; but just as he was about to close upon him, lo! a dust arose, and as it cleared away, there appeared the bridegroom of war and battle—the destroyer of sturdy warriors—the serpent of the bowels of the desert—the instructor of heroes in battle—he, in whom the world glories—the Chief Antar, son of the Chief Shedad, and his companions were like devouring lions; and as the Absians beheld Antar advance, they set up the shout of joy, Oh what a glorious morn! King Cais kissed him between the eyes, and told him what Harith had done, how he had slain his brother, and wounded Shedad. And to his inquiries of Antar about what had happened with Aswad and their wives and property, O King, said Antar, I have rescued our prisoners and our heroes, and I have returned Aswad to bondage and captivity, and we have not lost a single article, not even the value of a halter. The cause of this was, that Antar with ten warriors and Shiboob followed Aswad's track; and when their eyes met, Antar roared in a voice that made the mountains and the whole country resound, Ignoble dastards! I am Antar, son of Shedad: let go those women and children. No sooner did Aswad and his companions hear the voice of Antar, the lion-knight, than they were stupefied and confounded; their bodies were struck

with horror; their complexions changed. Come on, cried Aswad to Locait and the Brandisher of Spears; on to the sturdy slave, for he has only a small party of cowards with him. Comfort your heart and brighten your eye, cried they all; soon will we show you a day of horrors. But our opinion is, you should station a party of us over the prisoners, that our hearts may not be occupied in the hour of battle. This being done, the Brandisher of Spears and Locait with their warriors returned to engage Antar, who received them as the parched earth the first of the rain: he yelled in their horses' faces, and thus drove them on their haunches, and made them hurl their riders off their backs. As soon as the women heard the voice of Antar, their pain and sorrow vanished; joy and gladness visited them. Shiboob sought the post of the prisoners; he met the heroes that were stationed over them sitting still, and contemplating the battle. He rushed towards Harith, son of Zoheir, in the rear of the guards, who were leisurely enjoying the spectacle of the combat: he released him from bondage, and, in less than an hour, they had released one another: then mounting the horses to which they had before been bound, they made an assault to assist Antar, exclaiming as in one voice, O by Abs! O by Adnan! At this shout his powers expanded; but Aswad seeing the prisoners rescued, was alarmed. He would have fled, but Shiboob perceived him. Follow me, O Prince; he cried out to Harith, son of Zoheir. But the warriors of Aamir and Darem,

when they saw Aswad fly, gave their bridles to their steeds. Antar pursued them with the Absians, till they drove them out of that country, having first taken ten prisoners, and slain twenty heroes; the remainder bent their fugitive course towards the wastes and the wilds.

Antar and his comrades were returning, when lo! Shiboob and Harith, son of Zoheir, advanced with Prince Aswad their prisoner, whom they dragged along as they would a camel. Eh! O Ebe riah, said Antar, how didst capture Adwad? Know, my brother, replied Shiboob, when he beheld you, and how you slaughtered his men, he fled; but I pursued him till I overtook him; I smote his horse, and wounded him in the pasterns. Aswad fell off; I jumped on his breast; he resisted; I drew forth my dagger, and he cried, Quarter, O Shiboob! and surrendered himself to me. I pinioned him well, arms and shoulders. Antar congratulated them on their safety, and wishing the women joy on their security, he stationed a guard over Aswad and his comrades. O Antar, said Aswad, what advantage is there in keeping me in captivity? Let me go this once, and accept me as your friend and companion in every strait and difficulty. Eh! and why should I let thee go? said Antar; just to assemble against me all thy host and tribes, and come and engage me a second time? Who, said Aswad, can ever dare to fight thee again, or ever come near thee in the combat? Never will I approach the spot where thou art. Know too, O Aboolfawaris,

that Harith is gone to fight on the side of the Fazareans. Upon this the heart of Antar was alarmed for the Absians, till day dawning, he mounted with his brave companions, and they travelled over the wastes and the sandhills till they reached home, where they reposed in the tents one night, and having placed Ibla and the other women in security, Antar again mounted; and as he passed over the deserts and the wastes, he recollected all the wars he had been engaged in, and thus recited:

"I bade adieu to her whose absence has deposited
"in me a flame whose smallest work is its blazing.
"I have quitted her, but my heart is with her, and
"I have preserved my covenants and stipulations
"with her. O Ibla, were absence a substance, thou
"wouldst see what burthens I have borne. As to
"the calamities of fortune, were they scimitars, their
"flash should not terrify me. O Ibla, how oft the
"raven of the desert croaks in love, and truly its
"croaking gives me ease. I was born for the tumul-
"tuous war of vengeance, when the bright foreheads
"of the high mettled steeds rush impetuously to
"the contest, and the brilliancy of the atmosphere
"is blackened with their dust, and the lustre of the
"sun's rays vanish, and the thursts clash with the
"barbs of the spears, whose lacerating gores wrench
"out the folds of the entrails. Never have I been
"present in the battle, on the day of horrors, but
"that I have made the whole country flow in blood.
"The horsemen look at me, in the day of the battle,
"with eyes, whose balls are fixed on high. They

" avoid me, and their fears tell them that the sheath
" of my sword is their necks. They abuse my
" complexion for its swarthiness, day and night;
" their hypocrisy is the least evil they speak. I have
" a sword, were it brandished in Hajir, even Irak
" would sparkle with its lightning."

As Antar repeated his verses, his companions were much delighted at his expressions, and his compliance with the times. They hastened forward till they came up to the Absians. King Cais had not finished speaking of Harith, son of Zalim, when Shedad, Antar's father, returned from his engagement with Harith; he was wounded, and his shoulder was raw with blood. Antar, as he viewed his father, wounded, and in that plight, had not the command of his senses. He rushed against Harith, who, observing the confusion, was still wavering between truth and doubt, uncertain what to think, till Antar himself stood before him, in the plain of battle; and as he looked at him, his limbs shook as with an ague: he was stupefied—he was aghast. Eh! thou ordure-born, cried Antar, how speedily thou hast forgotten favours! how quickly hast thou betrayed thy friends! verily, thou hast no honour, no word to be believed. By the faith of an Arab, I must slay thee, and thus Antar recited:

" Congratulate thyself, O Harith, that thou hast
" fallen on a hero, accustomed to plunge into dark-
" ness, ever amongst warrior princes. Thou shalt
" see in me this day a lion-hero, that deals the blow

" of tombs; the battle is veiled—the contest is " darkened, but retreat not, that my soul's anguish " may be extinguished. How many lion-heroes " have I slain with my sword, and how many gores " have I driven with my spear! Never has the " flourish of the spear-barb glittered in the morn, " but I was the first among the troops. I launch " into the hottest of the fight, and the dust is its " pavilion far extended over the plains. Death, in " the day of contention, serves my arm, and my " sword hews away the joints. Fiends dread my " power and my assault. Man, too, has felt my " virtue. I am fate amongst the foe—I am the " calamity—I am the establisher of woe amongst " the tribes. My star is above the minutest stars in " the constellation of the Great Bear; and as to my " ambition, kings talk of it in their assemblies. My " chest is broad, and my spear is a tearer, and my " vehemence is acknowledged in every army."

Now Harith hung down his head towards the ground in fear of Antar. He meditated a while, and was confounded; again he had recourse to his artifices and stratagems. Welcome, welcome, O Aboolfawaris, he cried, thou ornament of assemblies! thou lion of the land! thou sublime in glory! thou pardoner of sinners! thou defender of children and women! O Aboolfawaris, verily I have sinned against thee, and what thou hast said of me was justifiable, for thou hast reduced me to that state, that I can no more raise up my head among the warriors. Indeed, I repent of my conduct towards

thee, in the deepest manner; but thou art acquainted with my story, and what has happened to me. I perceived my chance of success with Numan was weakened, and my apprehensions were realized. So I set at liberty Aswad and his horsemen, thinking that thy matters would be easily arranged with Numan. But the reverse is the event; for they still demand me, and had I not fled, they would have put me to death. But now that is all over; and I have no apology thou canst accept; I must exert myself in the contest with thee; but afterwards I will dismount from my horse, and cast myself under the hoofs of thy horse; Abjer, and will humbly ask thy forgiveness. Canst thou then pardon me this once? And if I ever again betray thee, may the mother of Harith be no more a free-born woman. May God curse thee, Harith, said Antar, above all mankind, and all that put their trust in thee or believe thee! But if I could suppose that forgiveness could purify thee, I would pardon thee. O champion of the Absians, cried Harith, thou knowest my sword Zoolhyyat is my greatest joy, and dearer to me than the life that animates my body —take it and forgive me, and he actually sheathed his sword and delivered it to Antar. Antar was amazed at his words, and astonished at his actions; for the surrender of arms prohibited all contest, and he dared not raise his hand against him. O Harith, said he, restoring his sword, I cannot from my heart confide in thee, and from me towards thee there can be no security or protection, but through King

Cais. And I know there is too much resentment in his heart against thee, for me to be responsible for him, and to engage his protection for thee. Yet march on before me, that I may intercede with him. So Harith went on before him, and whilst the two parties were amazed at seeing him (for they knew not what had happened), Hadifah began to quiz Harith. Eh! Harith, he cried, hast thou then returned to fight for this bastard slave? Woe! woe! O Aboolfawaris, cried Harith, turning round (for his back was towards Antar), scandal to the Arabs that they should thus speak of thee, and call thee bastard, and the least of thy acts towards me is this thy act, and this thy beneficence. Never will I return to the presence of King Cais till I have white-washed my face with him, either by the death of Hadifah or his captivity. And he drew forth his sword, quicker than the lightning's flash, and struck Antar a full blow on the head, and he attempted to kill him in the presence of the assembled nations. On Antar's head was one of the Chosrowean helmets, on which he always depended; but Harith's sword split it, cut the lining and wadding, and fell upon his head, making a gash on his forehead, and causing the blood to flow over his beard. Afraid, lest he should repeat the blow and destroy him, Antar exhibited the utmost steadiness. He shouted out to Harith with the roar of a lion, and directing his spear against him, resolved to pierce him; but Harith fled from before him, and sought the tribe of Fazarah. The day now disappearing, Antar

retired. The Absians met him on horseback, and stanching the blood, bound up his wound. King Cais and his brother also hastened up and inquired how he was. Antar told them the whole circumstance, and repaired to his father's tents, bellowing in the excess of his fury and rancour. He reposed that night, but was all anxiety for the dawn of day, that he might sally forth to the battle, and relieve his heart in the blows of the scimitar. As to the tribe of Fazarah, they reposed in a state of most perfect happiness. Hadifah went to meet Harith, and thanked him for what he had done, saying, Truly thou hast eased my sorrows, and hast done a deed shall be recorded from generation to generation; and hadst thou but slain that dæmon, thou wouldst have been the paragon of the age! O Ebe Hijar, said Harith, this hero cannot be numbered amongst the warriors thou hast ever known. Speak not much to me on this subject, for I am well aware of Antar's style of fighting, and I only dealt him the blow of one already terrified. I had deceived him, but my heart did not feel secure in him, so I resolved to exert my power over him, before he should exert his power over me, and I have wounded him. He has courted the combat, and in every respect he is a true hero. They continued thus till the laughing morn approached, when the warriors drew their swords, and extended their spears. The first who started forth to the field was the knight of the precipitate attack—the serpent of the bowels of the desert—the raiser of the lofty column—the noble

Prince Antar, son of Shedad. He sought the contest, calling out for Harith, his heart full of resentment; and when the Fazareans saw him, and heard his harangue, they were bewildered and amazed, Hadifah inquired for Harith, but they could not find him, and it was said that he had fled, taking with him ten of the most intrepid horsemen. Now Harith, in fact, was aware that Antar would not care for his wound, but would come forth in the morning to challenge him, when he would be under the necessity of fighting him; therefore, only waiting till the darkness thickened, and the eyes of mortals were asleep, he took with him ten horsemen, and carried off a good string of camels, belonging to the tribe of Fazarah, and sought the land of Mecca. Hadifah was greatly troubled. May God curse Harith, son of Zalim, and afford him no security on the road, said he; for he has not regarded the rights of his friend. Antar's rancour was at its height. He assailed the Fazareans, and rushed upon them—he laid low the horsemen—he destroyed the brave—and he cut his way through the heroes; and when the Absians saw his attack, they prepared to assist him; but Cais prevented them, saying, Let us abstain from the combat, that we may ascertain what is become of Harith; perhaps he may be concealed. So he sent word to Antar, and told him of the state of things. Antar bore the battle alone till evening, when he retired. The tribe of Fazarah was in the greatest consternation; all their fortitude was staggered—their heads hung down, and they passed

that night in fears, forming various conjectures. The next day, they again mounted for the combat, and long lasted the thrust with the tall spears, and the blow with the polished scimitars. Antar and the horsemen set fire to the hearts of the tribe of Fazarah—they drove them to their tents. The parties continued in this state for three days; on the fourth, the horsemen allied to Hadifah separated, and sought their own country, frightened at Antar and his assaults. Thus the tribe of Fazarah being disgraced, depended on the heights of the mountains. The Absians seized their dwellings, and took up their abode there, surrounding the Fazareans on all quarters, and cutting off every communication; for Antar vowed, that he would not leave of the tribe of Fazarah one to speak or one to hear. This state of things continued ten days; they were in the greatest difficulties, and every friend and comrade had abandoned them. They lighted fires by night on the mountain tops, and fortified themselves amongst the sandhills. By day, Hadifah descended on foot with his brothers, possessing themselves of the ways and defiles, and defending their families with their scimitars and glittering swords, but feeling certain of overwhelming calamities. On the eleventh day, Hadifah assembled them. O my cousins, said he, know that Antar will not quit us, and will not leave a remnant of us alive; so fight the foe—expose your lives—pierce them with the spears, and dearly sell your existence. Thus he continued to encourage them with harangues, till they disregarded life.

Armour felt light; they mounted their generous steeds, and snatching up their tall spears, they precipitated themselves from the mountain-tops. But the women began to weep and lament, and a crowd of noble slaves followed them. The Absians were eager for the contest, and Antar hastened to the scene of spear-thrusts and sword-blows; but Cais, observing the desperate fury of the Fazareans, said to Antar and the Absians, O my cousins, by the God of heaven, attend to me, retire to some distance from them; thus urged on by their own virulence, they will soon be mixed with us in the desert, then let us turn upon them and plunder their lives. And he wheeled away his horse, and Antar followed him. The others, seeing the banners move away, also turned their horses heads and retired. The Fazareans were greatly delighted; their eagerness was excited—they raised their shouts, and galloped forward to capture the Absians. The dust arose—the sun was veiled; and Hadifah cried out, O my cousins, ply the sword on the foe; let not one survive! King Cais and Antar exulted, and wheeled all at once, followed by the noble horsemen; and the spear-thrust commenced after this short suspension. The heroes clashed against each other—exertion was universal—artifice availed not—conversation was at an end—horses trampled over the plain—hands, right and left, were palsied—vallies were not distinguished from mountains. The dust arose like night, and war was in all its terrors. The brave exulted on their saddles, and persisted—the coward

felt assured of death and despair—blood flowed and streamed—the hearts of the bravest failed—the battle continued to rage till the Almighty permitted the day to depart; the warriors were laid low upon the sands, and gray were the locks of infants on that day. But God prospered the Absians, and nothing appeared sweeter to them than death, and the approach of fate. This was their condition, when lo! a dust drew nigh, and it moved along like a cloud that equalized the hills and the vallies. The arms of both parties instantly relinquished the blow and thrust, for they thought it was the dust of Harith returning, and with him a party of villains. In an hour, the dust cleared away, and there appeared a tribe of Hijaz, and seme horsemen of Mecca, in Yemen cloaks, and turbans of Kufian silk, all girded with straight spears, and scimitars of India; and their countenances were like the sparkling constellations: round them were slaves with Yemen javelins, all like lions, and clothed in panther skins; and when they advanced out of the dust, they moved gently between the two ranks and exclaimed, O by the Arabs! sheathe your swords, from striking bodies and skulls. Ye have agitated the chiefs of the sacred shrine: this is the Lord of the Holy Wall and Zemzem, the obeyed monarch, Abdulmotalleb, of the tribe of Hashem. Withdraw from the contest; hear what he says, and presume not to oppose his word. At hearing this, the two parties separated.

King Cais came forward, and saluting him, kissed

his hand. He attended him, and followed him till they reached the land of Shurebah, where the horsemen alighted at their tents, and the people were united to their wives. King Cais ordered sheep to be slaughtered, and a feast to be prepared, whilst Abdulmotalleb began to describe to them the peculiarities of Mecca, and the holy shrine, the virtue of Zenzem and the temple, and the appearance of our Lord Mohammed, the lamp of darkness. (May the peace of God be on him and his noble associates as long as the ringdove moans and the pigeon sings!) He informed him of his existence and appearance, and excited their wishes to live long, that they might perhaps comprehend him, and be guided by his light; and there was not one but anxiously longed to survive till his time that he might behold him, and might fight for him.

When the feasts of the tribes of Fazarah and Abs were over, Hadifah requested Aswad's liberty of King Cais, who assenting, asked the opinion of Abdulmotalleb on that point. It would be right, said he, to loosen his bonds. Summon him here, that I may make peace between you, and I will invite him to repair to King Numan, for he is the king of the age over every prince, and he commands all the Arabs; and by the truth of the God of old, no one is made a monarch or sultan but that there is imparted to him some secret knowledge to which a common man is not admitted; and were it not a favour from the God of heaven and earth, the post of honour of one would not be raised above another,

for we are all of the race of Adam and Eve. King Cais conformed with the orders of Abdulmotalleb, and sent some of his chief attendants to Aswad to release him from bondage. He invested him with a magnificent robe, and paid him every honour and respect, and begged his pardon for all that had passed. Abdulmotalleb took him by his side, and presented him some victuals. He ate till he was satisfied, and conversed; and in Abdulmotalleb's last words to Aswad he concluded by saying, Know, O prince, that God did not create men useless and helpless, and it is incumbent on his slaves to defend themselves against violence and oppression. Your brother is now King of the Arabs and Irak. Every thing is easy to him, because he has the language and the sword of a king; but it is his duty to settle the disputes of his people, and the Arabs, and the tribes, and not to act like a foolish man, for God will make him responsible for his tyranny. Thou hast seen how he has sent thee with armies and troops, but they have all been dispersed. All this is by the command of God, far and near. It is now deemed meet that thou shouldst return to thy brother Numan, and prohibit him from acts of outrage and hostility; advise him not to cut asunder the connexion between him and the tribe of Abs, and let him not act in a manner to incur the reproaches of kings and of the Arabs. It is ever particularly praiseworthy to respect kindred and relationship. O chief, said Prince Aswad, all these events were owing to Harith; but now that business is ter-

minated, and Harith has departed out of this land, I will request my brother to withdraw his aggressions from this tribe, and I will fill his ears with reproof and reproach.

Thus ended the day in feasts and merriment. The next day Abdulmotalleb took his departure, saying to King Cais, Every one must be aware that the horses of death are pursuing him, and that he is a captive in the grasp of fate and destiny; let him therefore content himself with a little in this world. Thus saying, he departed, accompanied with the chiefs of Abs and Fazarah, in order to bid him farewell. Aswad rode out also till mid-day, when he departed on his return to Irak. Abdulmotalleb halted in that country, and having made peace between the Absians and Fazareans, taking their bonds and covenants for the preservation of tranquillity, to which the Sheikhs of the two tribes were witnesses, he travelled over the wilds and the wastes. King Cais and Hadifah, with their companions, returned to their respective lands; but heart burnings and deep recollections still remained.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

As to Harith, when he fled from the tribe of Fazarah, he could find no asylum but at Mecca, for there every wanderer was secure. There he remained, and connected himself with his grandfather, who was called Marah, son of Luvee. Now one day when Antar was sitting alone in his tent, there came to him a man from Mecca, one of the hermits of the tribe of Abs that seldom quitted the sacred shrine. Antar inquired of Harith. I saw him, said he, in the sacred place established, eating and drinking, enjoying the property he had plundered; but in his heart there is a flame blazing against you. I beheld in him what I never beheld in any human being. What hast thou seen in him? said Antar. My cousin, said he, Harith was one day walking round the sacred shrine, his sword slung over his shoulders, when a man called Amroo, son of Atnabah, the Yathrabite, stared at him. He inquired who he was? they told him it was Harith, son of Zalim. How! this must be the man, said the Yathrabite, who slew Khalid, son of Giafer, when he was asleep; and is his murderer now alive? O Arab, cried Harith, overhearing him, how art thou called among horsemen? I am called Amroo, son of Atnabah. Yathrab is my place of abode and birth, said he.

What mean you by your question? You have abused me, said Harith, for murdering Khalid in his sleep; perhaps I may meet you when you are awake. Again the Yathrabite began to satirize Harith in the following manner:

"O my friends, soothe me with pleasures, and "make me drink of the wine of enjoyment. Let "me hear the damsels strike the cymbals at the "time of joy and relaxation, when every new moon "sparkles before me, and every true lover passes "the evening with his mistress. I belong to a noble "tribe, but that is not my boast; their parentage "is known by the purity of their faith. My kindred "is a branch of the race of Adnan, brilliant and "resplendent with virtues. I am a knight, whom "the sword and lance obey when the spears are in-"terwoven. My companion and my aid in cala-"mities is my sword, whose edge I adore. Tell "Harith, son of Zalim, that I have spoken of him "the words of a true reporter, and that no one but "a coward kills a man asleep, and no one but a "hero can kill a man when awake."

When Amroo, son of Atnabah, had finished his verses, he set out on his return to Medina Yathrab, his heart boiling against Harith, for he dared not lay his hand upon him in the sacred shrine. Harith, learning from his spies and emissaries that Amroo had quitted Mecca on his way to Medina, followed him till Amroo entered his own dwelling. Waiting till night, he repaired to his house, and knocked at his door. Who art thou? said Amroo.

A suppliant for protection, said Harith. I will protect thee, said Amroo, by the faith of an Arab, were even Harith, son of Zalim, thy foe. If thou wilt aid me, added Harith, come not forth but merged in armour. Upon that, Amroo put on his arms, and plunged himself into his coat of mail; but his wife hung about him, saying, I smell blood in the voice of this caller; but he tore himself away from her, and paid no attention to her words. He went forth to the suppliant, and followed him; and when they had passed the palm-trees of Yathrab, O Amroo, cried Harith, turning round upon him, I am Harith, of whom you said he could only murder the sleeping. Thou art prepared, awake, clad in thy armour, and mounted on thy horse; now be on thy guard. Amroo was astonished, but resolved to fight him; he brandished his spear, and roared and bellowed. Son of Zalim, verily thou hast acted fairly, he cried, as he rushed at him. Harith met him, and the two engaged under the veil of obscurity, and continued to combat till the greatest part of the night was passed. Being now tired and exhausted, each stood apart from his antagonist; but Harith had again recourse to his artifices and perfidy: What say you, said he to Amroo, to cancelling the contract and abandoning the contest? Sheath thy sword, that I may also sheath mine. I heard your verses concerning me at Mecca, where you abused me for my conduct; they surprised me. I am desirous therefore to reply to them. Amroo sheathed his sword, and leaned against his spear, saying,

Well then, O Harith, let me hear what you have on your mind. And Harith thus recited:

"Supply me, dearest friends, with pleasures, be-
"fore my situation becomes too severe. Let not
"the railer's glut themselves upon me, or see me a
"prey to sorrow. I care not when I wake on
"Tuesday whether they call me upright or a pro-
"fligate. Ever let me replenish the ewers with
"excellent wine morning and evening. Moreover,
"never have I betrayed my engagement to God in
"my life; but a story from my enemies has reached
"me that would make the heart forget the cruellest
"disease, that no one but a coward slays a man
"asleep, and no one slays one awake but a hero.
"So I have traversed the deserts on my black steed,
"resembling the obscurity of night, anxious to en-
"gage in combat with the youth of Yathrab, that
"virtue may not appear like vice. I visited him
"when darkness had spread out its foot: he was
"like a full moon in the cup of the Pleiades. I
"challenged, and swift as a lion he welcomed me as
"soon as he saw me. I challenged him, and I be-
"held a hero mighty in the contest; a knight, at
"whom knights might quake with horror when he
"shakes swords or Semherian spears."

Amroo dismounted from his horse, and hastened in the fullest security of mind to embrace him, and to adjure him to enter Medina Yathrab with him. But Harith, as he saw Amroo approaching him, extended his arm, and opened wide his elbow, and stretching forth his spear more rapid than lightning,

he pierced Amroo through the chest, and drove it sparkling through his back, and hurled him down dead. He ran at him; he carried away his horse, and spoiling him of his arms, abandoned him cast down on the desert.

When Antar heard this account of Harith, the fire was kindled in his heart, and he placed spies and scouts over him. But Harith, after he had slain Amroo, and left him on the waste, returned to Mecca, and sold Amroo's arms and horse in his fears, saying to himself, There is nothing now to be done but to go to Aswad, and request of him to make peace between me and his brother King Numan, and to secure his protection for me. He set out in the night, and travelled on till he reached Hirah, where he saw multitudes and armies like the rolling ocean.

Now Prince Aswad, on being released by Abdulmotalleb, repaired to his brother, to whom he related what had happened to him with the Absians and Antar, and the arrival of Abdulmotalleb, who had adjusted the disputes between the tribes of Abs and Fazarah. O my brother, he added, he is a wise man, between whom and the Absians there is no altercation, as long as Antar the violent death is among them, for he fears not whole hosts, and no power alarms him. As soon as he encountered us, he only made one dash at us; he defeated us; he made his way right through us; and there was not one of us left in his senses. If matters are as you, my brother, represent them, said Numan, consider

what must be done. By the faith of an Arab, added he, I am aware of, and I have proved Antar's superior intrepidity, and so has every army you have sent against him and the Absians; for there was no warrior that engaged him, the lord of battles, but he discomfited him were he even attacked ten times over. Verily, I have beheld in Antar what I never saw in any mortal man before. If matters stand thus, continued Numan, where shall we meet a warrior that can cope with Antar in the field, and make him drink of the cup of death? O my brother, replied Aswad, if you are desirous of Antar's death, there is no one but Harith, son of Zalim; for he nears him in courage and resolution, and general excellence, and in fraud and deceit he is the most subtle of men. As to Harith, said Numan, who knows where he is that we may send for him, and offer him wealth and property? I will bring him to you, said Aswad. Equip an army for him against the Absians, and see what he will do; and every one he may slay of them it will be so much gained for you. Do whatever you please, my brother, said Numan.

Aswad returned home, and found Harith in his house, who sprang up towards him, and kissed his hands. The prince, much pleased, and feeling assured that Antar would at any rate be slain this time, received him with every attention and kindness, and told him what had passed with his brother. Early next day Numan's messenger entered to order Prince Aswad into his presence. Return, said

he, to my brother, and tell him I have a guest, and he is afraid of him.

The messenger returned and told him, and Numan gave him a mantle of security, with which the messenger went back to the prince, saying, Your brother sends his compliments, and says, Bring me your guest; and if it be even Harith, son of Zalim, this is a mantle of security. Upon this, Harith started up together with the prince, and proceeded to the presence of Numan, where they saw a numerous assemblage of chiefs, and horsemen, and warriors; and when Harith's eyes fell on Numan, he kissed the ground in fear and terror: he kissed his hand, piteously stating his apprehensions and dread, and the grievances and evils he had endured; and whilst they were eating, and the cups of wine were circling among them, the conversation fell upon the horsemen and warriors of the age; they also mentioned Harith, and how he had by stratagem contrived to wound Antar. O cousins, said Numan, a man's subtlety and stratagem for conquest are the perfection of the art of war; and were not a knight to be subtle as well as expert in arms, he would not be called brave, and he would not be talked of by the heroes for his battles and his contests. And as the turn came to Harith, Numan continued, saying, Tell us something of your treacheries and artifices. On condition, said he, that you will permit me to relate what happened to me the other day. Well, let us hear it, said Numan.

O king of the age, began Harith, know that the

knights of the age, men of faith, are seven, viz. Direed, son of Samah; 'Amroo, son of Wad, the Aamirite; Amroo, son of Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian; Zoolkhimar, the Himyarite; Aamir, son of Tofeil; the Brandisher of Spears; and the Chief Antar, son of Shedad. The impostors are also seven, viz. Cadmoos, son of Majid; Marah, son of Abdulazee; Jarcer, son of Mubadir; the Knight Awis; Amroo, the Kelbian; Saleek, son of Selikah; and he was silent. And you are the seventh? said Numan. Yes, said he.

And now, continued Numan, tell us some of your perfidious acts, and what stratagem you lately practised. O King, said Harith, my story is extraordinary, and it ought to be recorded after my death. It is thus: after my adventure with Antar, I left the Fazareans, taking with me ten of the noble Arab horsemen; and when we had travelled half way, we stopped in a country called Mancabit ool Mesalik; we became very hungry, so much so, that we were reduced to infinite distress and perplexity, when lo! we saw a hovel built of straw, and a small tent pitched, at the entrance of which was a well-proportioned spear, and a sword suspended, and a horse saddled, and a youth of the dimensions of a lion, cooking his victuals on the desert. We galloped up to him; Young man, said we, is there any Arab horde near you? The youth raised up his head, and smiling at us, said, Why ask ye for villages and hordes? These victuals are enough. Know, O Arabs, victuals were only formed to be

eaten, and property was only created to be spent. Liberal men are only esteemed by the wise; and the niggard is only fit to be killed: and ye are now entitled to honour and every attention.

When, O King, we heard this, we were surprised at the elegance of his mind: he immediately entered the tent, and returned bringing with him a large dish full of camel's milk, and mixed with the honey of bees cooled in the wind; and we drank of something sweeter than the purest water. We then let our horses loose to graze, and sat down.

As we were examining the young man's tent, and his arms, and his armour, and were wondering at his solitary life in the barren waste, I happened to turn round; my eyes fell on a damsel more lovely than the refulgent sun. Look, said I to my comrades, at that damsel, who is linked to the seat of my reason and my heart. She must be mine, were even this youth to give me to eat all the bread and salt in the universe. We therefore laid our plans to violate his faith, and to destroy his life; and whilst he was cooking victuals for us till all was ready, we were meditating villany and perfidy.

At last the youth entered the tent, and brought out a great quantity of Indian corn, which he put into a dish, and mixing it up with some meat and wine, he took up the dish by the handles, and placed it before us, saying, Advance, noble Arabs, come on; here are some victuals. So we ate till we were satisfied, and the youth stood waiting on us. And when he was about to take away the dish, I said,

What is this damsel to you? What mean you by that question? replied he. Know, O youth, I added, that your property is sacred to us, but we are a gang of Arab depredators, who admit of no faith; we acknowledge no sect; and every one that receives us kindly, we outrage. But as to you, we will spare you on account of your hospitality, as we have eaten your victuals. Take whatever horse you please of ours, escape, and leave the damsel, and your horse, and your tent, and say no more about it.

At hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of the youth. This damsel, said he, who is in the tent, is my sister; and out of my great anxiety about her, I have secluded myself in this barren waste; but between you and me, there is a sacred respect and engagement, as you have eaten and drunk with me; and I wish you would leave us in peace. Know then, youth, said I, I must carry away this damsel and horse, were they even surrounded by a thousand of the noblest heroes: make no more noise about it, or I shall leave some food for the beasts and birds of prey. If it be so, said the youth, and you will not quit this desert, wait a little for me, that I may bid my sister farewell, and give her my last exhortation: That you may do, said I. And he repaired to his sister, and found her in tears, as she thus spoke:

"Never be the day that the troops mounted on "roan steeds should see us prisoners. They desire thy "death, my brother, maliciously; before this never "knew I of sorrow or guilt. Fight then for thy

" sister, who depends on thee; thou art her brother,
" thou art her father. Let not these wretches pos-
" sess themselves of my person, or seize me by force,
" whilst I am with thee; for shame would fall on
" thee, son of my father, and the horsemen east and
" west would reproach thee. Fear not death, sped
" by the hand of man: no one dreads it but a heart-
" less coward."

When the youth heard his sister speak thus, O King, he repeated these verses:

" Take thy farewell of me, O maiden, before I die;
" aid me with thy prayers against the foe. Per-
" haps the Creator of heaven and earth may pre-
" serve thy brother from death. A perfidious party
" has fallen upon us; in them there is no warmth
" of heart to pity thy sorrows. They have broken
" the sacred rights of hospitality; they have be-
" trayed us, and they consider as lawful my blood,
" and the dishonour of thy protector. Follow me,
" and behold my exploits, when the steeds charge,
" assaulting thy dwelling; weep for me with the
" sorrowing matrons, should I, after my combat, be
" left dead. And when the dove mourns on the
" Erak, O dove of the Erak, then aid me with thy
" plaints. O daughter of Aamir, if they give me
" fair play in the contest, I will destroy them for
" love of thee; but if the party outrage me,
" and play me foul in the fight, my life will be
" thy ransom. Alas! alas! should I die in my
" transport, and the foe, when thy protector is no
" more, take thee captive, O send my adieu to my

"father, and tell him I died by treachery in the "meshes of a net."

As soon as the youth, O King, had finished his verses, he came towards me with a resolute heart. Thou motherless coward, he cried, come on to the fight, that I may show thee horrors. Seeing that he was determined to fight, and that he would slay the first that should go out against him, Go thou forth, said I to one of my comrades; and at the word, my companion rushed at him. The youth cried out, What is thy name? for I have sworn by an oath, that I will not fight with one whose name is like the name of my father. My name, said the other, is Nabish*. Ay, said he, and the gnawers shall gnaw thy flesh; and thus he addressed him:

"Whoever covets a girl, or a horse and spoil, for "him there is a sword that deals death, and a knight "like a lion, of Arab race, who, were he to see "death distinctly, would not fly."

Thus saying, he rushed down upon my comrade like a driving cloud, and shouted at him like a roaring lion, and pierced him between the paps, thrusting his spear out between his shoulders. When I saw my companion fall dead, I said to his brother, Away now with thee, and retaliate for thy brother; and he sallied forth, but he slew him. Thus I sent one after the other, but the youth slew them, till my nine comrades were all killed, and I remained alone. The youth must be fatigued and exhausted in the

* i. e. Gnawer, or dog.

field, said I to myself; now I will stand forth against him, and will slay him, and enjoy the spoil and the damsel. I sprang at him like a lion of the forest. What! said he to me, dost thou wish that I should sin against my oath? and he attacked me. I met him, and there ensued between us a contest in blows and thrusts, that would have stupefied the eyeballs, and amazed the stoutest warriors.

We continued the engagement till it was dark, when crying out at me, Thou son of accursed parents! he assaulted like a lion, darting at his prey. He drew his scimitar from its scabbard, and I saw death sparkling from the lustre of his sword. But I dismounted quicker than respiration. I threw myself under the belly of his horse; Save me, O brother of the tribe of Aamir, I cried. Come forth, said he, thou art under my protection. And he immediately dismounted, and taking me by the hand, led me into the tent.

The youth stood up, and took off his armour and his other garments, as he said to his sister, Lay out thy knees for me that I may sleep. And he slept on his sister's knees, whilst she kept her eyes fixed on him. At last a drowsiness came over her also. I gazed at them till a third of the night was passed. On a sudden I jumped up, and unsheathed my Zoolhyyat in my right hand; I smote him on the chest, and divided him down to his girdle. The damsel, when she felt the blood of her brother, and heard the blow, opened her eyes, and seeing her brother dead, she rolled herself in his blood, and

drew a dagger from his waist, and placing it against her bosom, she leant upon it, and it issued out through her back. Then, O King, I grieved for her, and repented of what I had done. So I seized the youth's spoils, his sword, and his horse, his arms, and the clothes of the damsel, and all the property of my comrades, their horses, and their arms; leaving their carcasses stretched out on the waste, not even covering one of them with earth: and this is the end of my tale, and its consummation.

No sooner had Harith finished, when lo! an old man started up; Art thou not ashamed, O Harith, he cried, to lie in the presence of this King? I know those people. If thou hast spoken the truth, show me some proof of it. Here is this ring, said Harith. Alas! my children, he cried. O King, this youth and damsel were my children, and Harith has murdered them; I must slay him: this is the ring of my son—read it. Numan took the ring, and read it, and lo! there was written thereon—Amroo, son of Harith. My vengeance is even more urgent than thy vengeance, said Numan to the old man; my fury is fiercer than thy fury: and he commanded his attendants to seize Harith. They accordingly seized him, and cast him into the dungeon of wrath. And the old man, the father of the youth, thus recited in the hearing of Numan:

"It is thus fortune acts with the great, and per-
"forms the deeds of revolving calamities; it gives
"all mankind sweets to drink at first, but its end
"is bitter as the meal of gall; it permits them to

" enjoy themselves, and become intoxicated with
" pleasure, but afterwards precipitates them into the
" grave. I have seen how the world betrays its
" inhabitants, for it has outraged me inwardly and
" outwardly. O King of the Universe, listen to my
" tale. I had a son, a knight among the tribes, and
" he had a sister like the full moon when it rises, of
" beautiful aspect, and of elegantly-shaped hands.
" During my whole life I never possessed but them;
" but the revolutions of the age quickened its trea-
" cheries against me; a violent death has destroyed
" them in the middle of the desert, and annihilated
" them with the cleaving scimitars. If I live with
" man, I will seek retaliation. The son of Zalim I
" have met in the presence of Numan: he related
" the story true and authentic, and confirmed by
" the assertions of the actor. O King, this day wreak
" vengeance on him, and slay him, who has made
" my tears to flow in waves. Truly, my son was
" asleep, and thou hast betrayed him: this is a fact,
" for Harith was awake. Had it not been so, and
" had he been mounted on the back of his colt,
" that outstrips the blustering tempest, he had been
" his match, fearless of the assaults of the Arab or
" the Persian. Hadst thou not betrayed him, thou
" coward born, he would have shown thee a blow
" in the midday heat. But 'tis the decree of the
" All-Merciful, who acts thus with all mankind;
" 'tis predestined fate. How many monarchs have
" been annihilated! How many warriors destroyed!
" But the God of the celestial vault still endures, to

" whom all secrets are known. My peace be with
" the world, since my only one lies dead, felled by
" the vilest of the tribes."

When the old man had finished, and Numan had heard his tale, astonished at his eloquence, he thus replied:

" Let the heart, O old man, give way to its sor-
" rows; for in the murder of Shirjibeel, I have been
" heir to woe. The great God has decreed against
" me the severest pains in grief and affliction, and
" the loss of his society: O fortune, aid me with
" tears and lamentations for the loss of a chief that
" would have been the champion of the tribe; had
" he lived, he would have relieved the poor every
" hour, and would have struck his antagonist with
" the Yemen sword. But this cursed wretch hastened
" him away with his perfidy, and made him, guilt-
" less as he was, drink of the cup of death. O that
" the whole tribe in a body had ransomed him with
" my life and my property, and then my friends
" and my family! But the decree of the All-Mer-
" ciful has separated us with the cup of division.
" His will has decided: be patient, submit to fate,
" in the dispersion of friendship, and the absence of
" my beloved. Though Harith has overwhelmed
" us with his perfidy, soon shall the people see him
" an object of vengeance. We will hang him by his
" hair, after torturing him, and we will abandon
" him on the gate of the city. O that Shirjibeel
" were present on such a day, and could ease the
" pangs of his bosom from all fear; O that on this

" day he could understand what is said of him, and " hear the words of my prayer! but, O son of " Zalim, we will open his tomb and uncover the " recesses of his grave."

When Numan had finished, he ordered the herald to proclaim in Hirah, that every one who wished to see the spectacle of Harith's execution, should be present the next day early at the centre gate. At hearing this, the people were delighted, and reposed. Early next day King Numan ordered a huge camel to be brought; they then produced Harith, and stripping him of his clothes, they nailed his hands to a long pole, and lighted candles of napht on his shoulders, his chest, and his back, and having mounted him on the camel, they paraded him round Hirah, that every one might behold him: this was a great day, the like of which never occurred in any other realm. When Harith perceived his fate, he repented of having come to Numan, and thus he spoke:

" Am I then Harith the lion of the valley, the " man renowned for iniquity? The murder of war- " riors by treachery was my glory, but I never fled " from the fiercest combat. How many women " have I captured from the tribes who never found " ransom from torture! My boast was to slay " sleepers in the night, and to capture women and " children. Atrocity is my nature; deceit my dis- " position; and I slay those that are present, and " those that are advancing. I knew not for what " I was coming, and that death without a guide was

" driving me along; they have mounted me on a " huge camel, and have lighted candles over my " hands. Alas! how foul is this death in which " my foes and my haters triumph. There is no " means to escape after all this; no ransom can " release me out of their power. I could wish for " one day of life, and to be possessed of my sword " and horse: I would cut down the skulls with the " decisive blow; till my wrist and hand were ex- " hausted. I would scatter far and wide every " combination with my shout, that should make " every heart quake with horror. I would take " vengeance on them with my arm. I would charge " them like the lion of the valley. I would slay " Numan and the old man who said, I am Harith, " the father of the children. I would destroy all " the horsemen in the battle with a sword of fire " without a firestick. I would capture their women, " and then violate them, and would relieve my " heart of every sorrow. I am Harith, son of " Zalim, the destroyer, one who never acknowledged " the sacred rights of hospitality."

Harith having finished these atrocious expressions, all the mob cursed him and reviled him; they dragged him off the camel, and nailed him against the city-gate, and shot at him with arrows till he was like a hedgehog, and pelted him with stones. After that they dug a pit for him and kindled a fire, and burnt him. And may God never have mercy on the mound of his tomb, or the tomb of his father! King Numan retired to his palace and held a coun-

cil, when lo! the messenger of Mocri-ul-wahsh * presented himself to give him joy on his arrival. And who is Mocri-ul-wahsh? said Numan. O King of the age, said one of his attendants, this knight is from the land of Syria; he has vanquished horsemen and warriors, and wishes to exhibit his prowess in your presence: he states that he demands no property, no favours of you, till he has proved his superiority over armies and heroes. At hearing this, Numan was rejoiced, and smiled: By the faith of an Arab, said he, if this knight fulfils his promise, I will give him whatever he demands, and I will send him to fight Antar, son of Shedad; for a wary knight takes advantage of every thing. He then directed Mocri-ul-wahsh into his presence, and received him in the most honourable manner. Now this Mocri-ul-wahsh was a horseman and a valiant hero; he had overcome all the armies of Syria; neither high nor low were able to cope with him. The reason of his coming to Hirah was, that he was enamoured of a damsel called Maseeka, the daughter of the King of Hooran. He had demanded her of her father, whose name was Majeer, son of Sahl, and he betrothed her to him, but required an immense quantity of cattle, and amongst other things, a thousand Asafeer camels. Mocri-ul-wahsh assenting to his request, made preparations that very day, and taking with him fifty horsemen of his tribe, he

* Feeder of wild beasts.

sought the land of Irak, when presenting himself to Numan, he told him what we have stated, and King Numan was amazed at his conversation and the immensity of his stature, and the thickness of his arms, and the agitation of his eyes. He took him by his side, and saluting him, called for dinner, and when it was brought, O knight of Syria, said he, know that I have a foe in the land of Hijaz, against whom all the armies and warriors have failed: all I demand of you is to vanquish him in the combat. O King, said Mocri-ul-wahsh, this is exactly what I wished and desired. Show me this knight who vanquishes armies and disgraces heroes; I will let you see what I will do with him in the field of battle, and with all his tribe and his warriors. By the faith of an Arab of Medher, said Numan, if you will but vanquish this Antar, and bring him a prisoner before me, I will not let you return home, but as a great king, with all the Asafeer camels. Mocri-ul-wahsh reposed for three days in the plenitude of enjoyment and noble hospitality; but on the fourth day Numan directed his men to order the armies to mount, that he might behold the prowess of Mocri-ul-wahsh. King Numan's troops being mounted to the number of twenty thousand, he himself also mounted, and the standards and banners were fixed over his head. Then mounted Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of Syria. They beat the drums, and the cymbals, and the trumpets sounded. Upon this the horsemen started forth and charged. Soon after, Mocri-ul-wahsh,

the horseman of the tribe of Ghasan, came forth flourishing his spear on the plain, to the amazement of all the horsemen; and as he thought of his beloved Meseeka, he thus spoke:

"I am the Feeder of wild beasts in every desert, "and their provisioner in the flesh of every hero. "I am the Feeder of wild beasts in every battle; I "destroy the foes with the sharp-edged scimitar. "I am the Feeder of wild beasts; that is my name "and title. I destroy enemies and noble lion-"heroes. I am the Feeder of wild beasts in every "city, and I am the assaulting lion with warriors. "The inhabitants of Coori and Syria well know "that I destroy the Arab and the Persian. This "day, O King, thou shalt see that I am the knight "of knights with the spear-staff. If I do not "destroy Antar and his tribe, may my hand never "bear a lance or a sword. I will leave the country "of his tribe a waste, and I will drag its inhabitants "along in fetters like wild beasts. Alas! O Ma-"seeka, keep thy engagement with me, and listen "not to the words of my bantering foes. I will "soon cast down the kings of the earth, east and "west, and I will sheathe my sword in the necks of "the Persians; otherwise I shall never succeed in "my wishes, and I shall never accomplish what my "heart so ardently desires."

When Mocri-ul-wahsh had finished, he galloped and charged and played with his spear over the plain, challenging his antagonists. (There were twenty thousand that day on the plain.) A knight

of the tribe of Wayil started forth, in whom shone every proof of courage, but Mocri-ul-wahsh stopped him short, as he was closing on him, and taking his foot out of his stirrup, he kicked him; and he fell headlong on the ground, he and his horse. A second, of the tribe of Lakhan, sallied out. He rushed at Mocri-ul-wahsh, and drawing his sword, he was about to smite him; but as he raised his hand with his sword, Mocri-ul-wahsh pierced him with a pike under the armpit, and threw him off his horse on the ground. A third, of the tribe of Shiban, then came out and assailed, but Mocri-ul-wahsh permitted him not to charge over the plain before he cast his pike out of his hand, and grasping him by his rings and his corslet, he dragged him off his saddle, and hurled him to the distance of twelve yards. They now came forward in tens, and twenties, and thirties. The business pleased him; and as he tossed up his head he attacked and assaulted the horsemen, and scattered them about, far superior to all the heroes. He continued thus till the day departed, and he had overcome five hundred lion-horsemen; but when Numan saw the intrepidity of Mocri-ul-wahsh, he was amazed at his force and skill: convinced he would vanquish Antar, he sent for him into his presence, and treating him with distinction, he gave him an honorary robe; he took him by his side, and returned with him to Hirah.

On the next day King Numan again mounted; the horsemen were drawn up in ranks, and Mocri-ul-wahsh, the horseman of the tribe of Ghasan,

advanced: he sent for a basin full of saffron, and fastened at the head of his spear a wadding steeped in the mixture, instead of a barb, in order to mark the horsemen with it, saying, That any one who could vanquish him in the charge might kill him, and should not be responsible for his blood; but that every one, whom he should mark, should retire from the field. Upon this, one thousand horsemen assaulted him—he met them and shouted in their faces—the horses reared up their heads, and calamities fell upon the riders—he rushed upon them—the dust encompassed them up to their bridles—till the sun was about to set, when Mocri-ul-wahsh had marked the thousand horsemen. King Numan ordered them to introduce Mocri-ul-wahsh to him; so the horsemen surrounded him, and conducted him to Numan, who gave him an honorary robe, and set aside some generous steeds, and treated him with all respect and attention, fixing over his head the standards and ensigns; he thus preferred him above the thousand brave knights, and also gave him tents, and pavilions, and banners; and Mocri-ul-wahsh became one of the princes of the age. I shall not deserve these honours and attentions, said he to Numan, unless I throw down before you the head of Antar, son of Shedad. Numan's heart was gladdened, and he wrote to all the Arab tribes.

About that time, the death of Harith, son of Zalim, was made known in every place, till the account reached the tribe of Abs and Adnan; and they were highly pleased at it, for they now knew that the

prop of the tribe of Fazarah was cast down. The heart of Hadifah was reconciled to Antar and King Cais, and they passed much of their time together, as also the other horsemen of the two tribes, till at last the Absians began to consult about Antar's nuptials: for King Cais had persuaded Malik, Ibla's father, to consent. About that time came a letter to Hadifah from his brother-in-law Aswad, telling him of Mocri-ul-wahsh, and saying, Rejoice, O Hadifah, in what will please you with respect to the Absians, for their total ruin is at hand; a horseman of the tribe of Ghasan is come to my brother, and he is now advancing towards you with armies like the swoln sea, and with them the Knight of the tribe of Ghasan. Rejoice in the completion of your wishes, and in the death of Antar, son of Shedad! On reading this letter, Hadifah was highly delighted, and he anticipated every good; but this news he kept secret. At the feast there was to be no one present but Rebia, of the family of Zeead, for he was the cleverest of them all; he was assiduous in his attendance on King Cais, and rejoiced in his joys, and in the security of his brothers, who were dispersed among the pastures, amusing themselves in the wilds and wastes with the slaves and shepherds, that they might not be eye-witnesses of Antar's marriage-feast, and not join in the general satisfaction.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Now it happened soon after, that Talib, Rebia's brother, went out to the pastures with the camels, and was sitting under an Erak-tree, drinking and singing; and whilst he was thus occupied, lo! a horseman of the tribe of Fazarah passed by, called Hasein, son of Dhemdhem-ul-Meree (this warrior was the son of Hadifah's sister). Observing Talib sitting down in a state of intoxication, he went up to him; Son of Zeead, said he, you are singing here very jolly and merry, under no apprehension of the Arab warriors. Eh! O Hasein, said Talib, is there any security but in our land? Victory is on our banners, every good is in our merriment, and evil dwells in the country of our foes; for our swords are sharp, our spears long, and our arms strong and vigorous. Talib had not finished his reply, when Hasein rushed upon him, and shaking his spear in his face pierced him through the chest, driving the barb out through his back, and threw him down dead, weltering in his blood. He fled instantly to the tribe of Fazarah, and presenting himself to his maternal uncle, Hadifah, he told him what had happened. At which being much pleased, he, with a smile, told the warriors of Fazarah to repose under arms that night. But Talib's slaves and shepherds, when they

saw the fate of their master, placed him on his horse, and returned to the dwellings of the tribe of Abs, where they proclaimed the murder of Talib, and that Hasein was his murderer. At this, the family of Zeead knocked down their tents, and cut off the tails of their horses. May God destroy the tribe of Fazarah! cried Cais, much distressed; how infamous are their frauds! And they all began to weep and wail in grief, men and women.

King Cais summoned the family of Zeead and the noble Absians, and sent to order Hadifah to give up Hasein; but when the messenger arrived, and communicated his orders, Hadifah ordered him away: Tell Cais, said he, my nephew was intoxicated; and, besides, I am not a man to give up my sister's son to any king of the earth: but if you wish for the compensation, I will give you ten times the price of blood, so that the engagements between us may not be broken. The messenger returned, and reported Hadifah's answer. Rage and resentment took possession of King Cais; he shouted to the Absians, and ordered them to mount, and instantly the warriors and the heroes were ready; and no one remained behind but Antar and the family of Carad, it being only an affair of retaliation for the family of Zeead.

King Cais had just cleared the tents, and the eagle banners were just fixed over his head, and all were eager to march to the fight against the Fazareans, when lo! a special messenger appeared, advancing over the desert. King Cais halted, and the

Chieftains stared; the messenger dismounted from his camel, and hastening towards King Cais, he kissed his feet in the stirrup: and behold it was one of Mootegeredah's slaves. What's the matter, worthy slave? said Cais. O my lord, replied he, there are advancing in my rear armies like the swoln ocean, and with them a giant-knight and an intrepid lion, called Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of the tribe of Ghasan, the destroyer of the brave; be on your guard against death and destruction, for the armies in less than three days will be in this country: prepare, therefore, your implements of war against slaughter and ruin. At hearing this, the light became dark in the eyes of Cais. And why did not your mistress, said he, inform us before the enemy marched against us, that we might have written to our allies, and those in whom we trust in our troubles and our relaxations? My mistress, added the slave, could not do so till the armies had departed; no one was permitted to stir out, for Numan had stationed guards over all the horse-roads till the moment the troops marched; then my mistress ordered me to set out with the news; so make your preparations, ere death overtake you. Cais's heart was greatly perplexed at these occurrences. He instantly sent for Antar, and told him what was planning, and that Numan was on his way with armies and Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of Syria. This is all owing to your temporizing conduct, said Antar; had you permitted me to strike off Aswad's head, and slay his companions, many of these

troubles would have been avoided. My opinion is, we should march first against the tribe of Fazarah, and put them all to the sword, and leave them not a tent standing; then we will meet the armies of King Numan, were there even with him man and genii, and the fiends that rebelled against our Lord Soliman. O Aboolfawaris, said Cais, the foe is nigh at hand; and if we go against the Fazareans, we cannot reach them till evening; we must there repose till the morning; and certainly in two or three days we shall not be relieved of them; and I fear these foreign Arabs may reach our country whilst our property is unprotected, and thus succeed in their projects against us, and our troubles be prolonged. It will be more expedient for us to remain here and prepare to encounter the foe. My lord, said the slave who brought the news, the carnage amongst you will be trifling, but the prisoners numerous; for Numan has prohibited them from slaying, and has recommended them only to make prisoners, and for that purpose he has sent a number of his satraps, with Mocri-ul-wahsh, who, however, has engaged to slay Antar, the subtle hero, and has demanded as a reward a thousand Asafeer camels. Evil be his fate! false are all his hopes, said Antar, for by the faith of an Arab, I will have no knight of camels in our country, but hung to a gibbet. Do not consider us, cousin, said Cais to Rebia, as he retired, as neglectful of your retaliation; but when we have defeated Numan's armies, we will return upon the tribe of Fazarah, and will destroy their land, otherwise we

shall never be quiet. Thus the heart of Rebia was consoled; and the Absians alighted at their tents, preparing for the slaughter and the battle.

As to Hadifah, he was expecting the attack of the Absians, in retaliation for the son of Zeead, that he might raise a war against them, and appease his heart. The news reached him that Cais had mounted, and that his march was only interrupted by the arrival of a messenger, bringing news of Numan's approach with his armies. Hadifah was overjoyed, for he now anticipated the total destruction of the Absians, and he ordered the tribe to prepare for battle. As soon as day dawned Hadifah mounted Ghabra, and the horsemen followed him. As to Cais and Antar, they reposed that night, when lo! the next day the desert was filled with armies, and horsemen, and troops, like the swoln ocean, till the whole region was crowded, and the waste and wild appeared too confined for the multitude of banners and standards. Antar shouted to the warriors, and they mounted their chargers, whilst the weeping was loud among the women, alarmed at captivity and dispersion. Well, my cousin, said Ibla to Antar, this day the foe will take us captive. At this word the light became dark in Antar's eyes. Daughter of my uncle, he exclaimed, at thy captivity there will be the violent death, and the blow that is irresistible and unfailing. Antar uncovered his head and attacked, and his assault made the valleys and the mountains tremble. Now Antar had a shout of wrath, that made the mountains shake and the

hollows resound; it drove back the horses in affright, and they hurled off their riders in the excess of their agitation, and trampled down each other. Antar shouted to the attack in the presence of Ibla, and assaulted the armies with a heart resolute in dangers. The Absian warriors attacked in his rear, all light-hearted in the intrepidity of Antar and his nephew Hatal: they met the armies of Numan with cleaving sword-blows that even Davidian corslets could not repel. Antar poured forth roars like crashes of thunder, whilst the Absian women encouraged the men to the carnage, crying out, Where is he who protects the women and the maidens? Thus the Absians were engaged in the war of life and death, till they drove back the enemy from their tents by main force.

As to the Fazareans, Hadifah ordered them to the fight; they assailed the Absians on all sides. Calamities thickened upon them, and misfortunes and catastrophes multiplied upon them; and had not Antar been a dreadnought hero, the Absian tribe could not have survived that day, for the armies that attacked them consisted of fifty thousand bold horsemen; and the tribes of Abs and Ghiftan amounted even to less than six thousand, and this proportion is wide of any proportion by which any calculation can be made. But in less than three hours horror of Antar pervaded the hearts of Numan's army, and the foremost shrunk back upon the rear, shouting at Antar from a distance, but not daring to approach the spot, where stood Antar, the

violent death. Mocri-ul-wahsh was highly incensed at the armies having commenced the attack without his permission, and at the assault of the Fazareans. Had I wished to destroy them, said he to his comrades, I would not have left them a spot to stand on: but Prince Aswad sent with me these foreign Arabs, that they might settle in their country, and be neighbours to the tribe of Fazarah. At last he resolved to attack Antar, the object of his amazement, saying, By the truth of the Messiah, this slave is a brave knight and a sturdy warrior. Should I vanquish him in the combat, I may boast over all the dwellers on earth. In the meantime Antar was in the fiercest of the fight, and the hottest of the thrusts and blows, raving like a camel, when lo! Hasein, son of Dhemdhem, treacherously came behind, and raising his spear in his hand aimed a dreadful thrust at him, crying out, Take this, thou ordure-born, at the hand of Hasein, son of Dhemdhem-ul-meree, the vanquisher of heroes. Antar turned round to see what was the matter, and the barb of the spear fell on the circle of the eye, and wounded him. Born of filth, thy blow has failed, he cried; a warrior is proof against the blows of such a poltroon. And he aimed his spear at him; but when Hasein saw this, he gave the reins to his horse and fled, and sought the tribe of Fazarah, where he related to his uncle Hadifah how he had deceived Antar and wounded him. Hadifah rejoiced: God prosper thee, O Hasein, said he, for what thou hast done to this son of a coward; hadst

thou slain him, thou wouldst have been exalted above all mankind. After this wound Antar kept a wary eye on the tribe of Fazarah, slaying an innumerable, incalculable number of them, till evening.

Numan's army retired and halted, in the greatest astonishment at the prowess of Antar, and the generous Absians. As to Antar, he retired at the head of his comrades, like a Judas tree, so great was the quantity of blood that streamed over him. King Cais met him, and saluting him kissed him between the eyes, and inquired about his wound. My wound, O King, said Antar, is quite well. To-morrow I will challenge Mocri-ul-wahsh to the combat; if he accepts it, all further trouble will be prevented. We will not permit you, O uncle, said Hatal, to engage in the contest whilst you are in this condition: depute me on this affair. O Hatal, said Antar, thou art indeed a noble fellow in the battle, but thy name is not Antar, son of Shedad. I know also, O Hatal, that the Absians besides Antar have no strong support, and to-morrow were I not to be present in the field, their women would be made captives, and their children orphans. O cousin, said Cais, may God never deprive me of thy exalted courage! Thus they separated, having first stationed the night-patroles; and when the men had quitted Antar, his uncle's women and Ibla came to him, and congratulated him on his safety. Ibla advanced, and bound up his wound and wept. Check thy tears, said Antar to her; he lives not who can harm thee.

Early next day they mounted, with Antar at their head like a devouring lion and a ferocious tiger. He had tied bandages round his head in order to excite Hasein against him, that perhaps he might challenge him. Numan's troops also mounted with Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of Syria, as did also the tribe of Fazarah; but the satraps of Numan ordered them back. Hasein ran up to Hadifah; Uncle, said he, what means this? no one can comply with such orders. Can I too, I, who wounded Antar, son of Shedad, and left him nearly dead? Shall I leave to-day another to enjoy his death in the battle and contest? That shall never be, were I to drink of the cup of perdition. And he rushed into the field, and galloped and charged, challenging to the contest; and as he directed himself against the family of Carad, he thus addressed them:

"O my mother, sleep, be satisfied, and rejoice;
"this day will I relieve my thirst with Antar.
"When thou seest the birds mangle his carcass
"under the dust, then extol me and thank me.
"The slave—I left him with a spear-thrust over
"the face, the mark of which will ever endure as a
"frightful eye-sore. The top of my spear-barb
"tore out his eye, and I left him like a blind
"camel. This day I will leave him on the face of
"the earth, where he shall lie dead on the barren
"waste. I will make him taste thrusts from my spear-
"head, and I will smite him with my never-failing
"highly-polished scimitar. I will leave the beasts
"of the desert to run at him, and prowl round him

" on the wings of the turbid night. I will wipe out
" my shame with my sword and spear, and I will
" wreak my vengeance on the swarthy slave. I will
" destroy the Antar of Abs in the day of battle with
" my sabre, my lance, and my spear. When he is
" no more, the land of the Absians will soon remain
" an abandoned waste, like the barren desert; and
" all the slender maidens, like the sun whose glory
" is opposed to Jupiter, shall tremble."

When Hasein had finished, Hatal longed to engage him, but his uncle would not permit him: he returned his feet into the stirrups, and snatching up his spear off the ground, he rushed upon Hasein, like a lion darting from the forest, and as he assaulted him in a tremendous manner, he thus answered:

" O Ibla, grieve not for my wound. Rejoice in
" the victory of the scimitar of the swarthy youth.
" O Ibla, fear not for me the foe, but fill thy eyes with
" sleep, and watch not. O Ibla, round thy dwell-
" ing in the blackness of the night I am a man
" fiercer than the ravenous lion. Check thy plaints,
" for thy tears pierce sharper through my entrails
" than the barb of the Semherian spear. Wouldst
" thou ask the horse of me? O daughter of Malik
" (if thou art watching, why dost thou not see me?)
" he would tell thee of him who plunges into the
" dust, and that I have dispersed the whole army
" on my Abjer. I have scattered afar the tribe of
" Fazarah over the wastes, trembling through fear
" of Antar. As to the heroes of the age, I will an-

"nihilate them with the sword, and the lance, and "the spear. Pride not thyself, thou coward-born, "on my wound; thou wouldst say, thou hadst "riven a rock-bound veil. Verily the wound of a "hero is in the face, but thy wound in the day of "battle is in thy back. I am the son of Shedad, "whose fame is on high, mounting till it approaches "the sphere of Jupiter."

Antar shouted at Hasein, and rushed onward. Hasein was filled with exultation when he saw the bandages on Antar's head; so he thought that he would soon fall within his grasp. But as Antar made that assault he was aghast and stupefied, and repented of having ventured against him; yet no longer able to fly, he began to engage Antar, an charged him. Mocri-ul-wahsh could not view this event with indifference. This tribe of Fazarah is a treacherous tribe, said he, as he resolved to attack Antar; but he saw him a mountain, mountains could not overpower, and a sea visited by no calm, and a measure for which there was no standard. Antar continued to engage Hasein till he had fatigued and tired him; he closed on him, and hemmed him in, and stopping every means of escape, he stood up on his stirrups, and stretching out on his saddle, he struck at Hasein with Dhami between the eyes. Hasein received the blow on his shield, but Antar's sword split it in two, even dividing his helmet in twain, and continuing its course down between the thighs even through the belly of the horse down into the ground, and Hasein and his horse

fell cleft in four parts, and Antar cried out, O by Abs! I will not be controlled. I am the lover of Ibla, I will not be restrained! Numan's armies were startled; the Fazareans were eager to assault him, but Numan's satraps ordering them back, out started Mocri-ul-wahsh between the ranks, and he appeared in front of the two armies, till standing in the presence of Antar: Eh! O Antar, he cried, by the truth of the Messiah, my compassion for thee and thy tribe induces me to save you from death and total extirpation, for ye are indeed the horsemen of death; but ye have destroyed yourselves by incurring the hostility of King Numan, which you cannot possibly resist. It is my opinion you should surrender yourself to me immediately, and I will swear to you by the cross to engage Numan's protection: I will receive you as my friend and companion for ever and ever. Trouble not yourself to fight with me now you are in such a condition. Return in order to bring about an amicable arrangement, so that you may not be talked of, and your glory defaced amongst men, and let not your foes and enemies exult over you. Eh! thou son of a cuckold, cried Antar, away with thy nonsense. What! shall I surrender myself to thee without fighting? I, whom the lions of the forest dread? Come on; on to the plain, that I may tear out such absurdities from thy brain. As he spoke, he shouted at Mocri-ul-wahsh, and rushed upon him; but he also received him as the parched earth the first of the rain. Now these two

giants met like two ferocious lions, and sent forth hideous yells that seared their horses' ears; the limbs of their warriors quaked with horror, and those present imagined the very heavens were rent asunder, and that the day of judgment was at hand; the mountains were convulsed, and the earth trembled. After these shouts, they dashed against each other like butting rams; and as they rebounded they wielded their spears, and kept up a fierce contest till the eyeballs of the spectators sickened, and the whole country shook. They exhibited a combat replete with terrors, and every horror was redoubled: they retired; they advanced, ready with the draught of instant death. The two armies were amazed, and widened the scene of battle for their efforts, whilst the heroes charged. They continued in this state, calamitous and terrifying, till the evening came on, when they both separated in security, neither having been able to vanquish his antagonist either in blows or manœuvres. Mocri-ul-wahsh sought his own horsemen, almost at his last gasp at what he had endured in the combat with Antar. Antar also retired, and the bandages of his wound were loosened; the blood trickled down his face, and he returned in a condition not to give pleasure to his friends. The tribe of Abs and Adnan met him with King Cais; they saluted him, and inquired about his adversary. My cousins, said he, he is indeed a valiant knight, and a stout warrior in the contest; but to-morrow, God willing, I will make

it a decided business. And as he dismounted from Abjer, Ibla met him, and stanching the blood, bound up his wound.

As to Mocri-ul-wahsh, he went back to his people, where Hadifah met him. O knight of Syria, said he, grieve not thy heart, for know, wert thou not the paragon of the age, thou wouldst not have returned in safety from the presence of Antar; for, in his life, he never engaged a knight and quitted him without deciding the combat, or accomplishing his hopes. O Hadifah, said Mocri-ul-wahsh, never in my life did I behold a more valiant fellow than that Antar; but to-morrow I will make it a business of certainty. He passed that night vexed and uneasy that he had not succeeded against Antar. It was scarcely morning when he mounted his horse, and the armies of Numan were also ready. Thus too the tribe of Abs and Adnan sought the theatre of war. Antar remained behind, for feeling somewhat tired in the morning, he said to his brother Shiboob, As soon as you see Mocri-ul-wahsh start forth into the plain inform me, that I may sally out to fight him. When the troops were drawn up, Mocri-ul-wahsh appeared on the plain; and as he galloped and charged, challenging to the engagement, he called to mind his beloved Maseeka, and his separation from her, and thus he spoke:

"Sweet to me is the zephyr, O land of Syria; it "is sweet when my disorder afflicts me. Blow, then; "perhaps the breath of Maseeka may meet thee, "and her breath convert thee into perfume. The

" maiden! musk dwells under her veil, and when " impregnated with the moisture of her mouth be- " comes most fragrant. When she moves, the ele- " gance of her shape waves like the reed agitated " by the northern breeze. Wert thou to see her " thou wouldst behold the eye of the fawn, whose " heart is fluttering at the wolf in the evening. O " Mocri-ul-wahsh, said she (and I was preparing " for departure, whilst my tears streamed down my " cheeks like a river of blood), wilt thou not return? " My return is at hand, said I: she bade me adieu. " My heart pants for her society for ever; and " when she calls on her lover he will answer her. I " went to King Numan—where is the cloud that " has not descended on him? I engaged the horse- " men that were dear to him; I returned, and my " spear was dyed in blood. He gave me property, " and camels, and presents: the gift was noble— " noble was the donor. He sent me with his armies " against a knight whom all knights acknowledge; " and he is generous. I have engaged him with " the spear-thrust; then I knew him. I had " wronged him, but excellence is in him. I strug- " gled with him in the contest and in the plain; I " saw in him most wonderful deeds: but if this day " I destroy not their support with my sword, my " heart will not be glad in the enjoyment of my " beloved."

Mocri-ul-wahsh had not finished his verses when Hatal stood before him, for Antar had staid behind, and his heart was wearied with passion. Youth,

cried Mocri-ul-wahsh, where is Antar the great? If his wounds prevent him from mounting, he is not to be blamed. I gave him a lesson yesterday, and have rendered him unequal to the fight. Let him not be brow-beaten by me, but let him mount with me the road of ignominy. Eh! shall he acknowledge himself disqualified from fighting thee? said Hatal. Thy death is at hand; and as to what thou sayest about his not coming forth against thee, that is out of contempt for thee and thy like. I adjured him by the most serious of oaths to permit me to sally forth to the contest; so come on, fight! and he shouted at Mocri-ul-wahsh, thus reciting:

"The breeze, O land of Hijaz, is fragrant to me;
"blow then in the face of my amorous adversary.
"Tell Mocri-ul-wahsh to return in safety home, or
"he will return spoiled. If Maseeka be thy final
"object and desire, how has fortune cast thee af-
"flicted amongst us? Thou speakest and repeatest
"her beauties and charms, and on that point thou
"art in distress. O my friend, sing to me of the
"fame of chieftains; talk not to me of every rose-
"bud and perfume. The sighs of love are a dis-
"grace among men, particularly when wars are ac-
"cumulated upon thee. If thou art indeed sick
"with love, the sword of my maternal uncle is a
"doctor and a physician. How many noble horse-
"men like thee has he sought, and they have re-
"mained dyed in the gore of wounds! Let not his
"wound over the face inspirit thee; it was fate,
"whose changes are ever predestined. He is the

" lion of every sand-hill and battle; he is the
" greatest of heroes and princes. Antar, my uncle,
" is the bravest of men, the most valiant of all the
" dwellers on earth without contradiction."

The knight of Syria was highly incensed: Thou art, then, said he, the son of the sister of that Antar, that black cuckold! and he rushed at him, and addressed him:

" Thou hast abused me for my weakness, thou
" foulest Arab; thou art a coward, not akin to war.
" The Absian Antar is linked to Ibla, and through
" love of her a flame blazes in his heart. A man in-
" deed weeps for the loss of his life, and mourns and
" laments at the loss of his love. Who am I, that
" thou shouldst censure me, son of a dastard! and
" my heart is cauterised with absence, and opposi-
" tion, and anguish. By the truth of the Messiah,
" the purest of every living thing, who created a
" bird out of clay with his miraculous breath, and
" recalled life into the corpse when it was shrouded
" and delivered to the bowels of the grave deprived
" of life, I will stretch ye both on the centre of your
" land, and I will lead your weeping damsels cap-
" tive, and I will cry out with a loud voice in the
" plain of war, Come forth towards me, behold
" wonders in me. If Antar indeed is exhausted
" with the wounds, I must not then annihilate him.
" Let the Arabs laugh him to scorn. I will leave
" the land a desert; and as to its inhabitants, their
" blood shall stream over the country. I will fight
" Antar; then will I dash him to the earth. I will

" make him drink the cup of death, and bring down " perdition upon him."

Mocri-ul-wahsh having finished, he shouted at Hatal, and resolved to overwhelm him in death, on account of the foul expressions he had addressed to him. Hatal met him, and there ensued between them the contest of spears and swords, that amazed the warriors, and startled the sturdy heroes for two hours. At last exhaustion fell on the shoulders of Hatal, for he was no match for him, nor accounted among his equals. Mocri-ul-wahsh perceiving his situation, determined to destroy him, as he knew Antar was his uncle; again he assailed him, and was about to put an end to him, when lo! a roar that made the mountains shake, and the hollows re-echo, and some one exclaimed, Away, thou knight of Syria, pride not thyself in the slaughter of striplings. Turn on one who will speedily give thee thy death and extinction. The warriors awhile considered who could have sent forth that tremendous shout, when lo! it was the noble warrior—the destroyer of stout heroes, Aboolfawaris—the chief Antar, son of Shedad. He delivered Hatal from Mocri-ul-wahsh, and then attacked him. The cause of Antar's coming was Shiboob, who, on seeing Hatal nearly overcome, quitted the field, and informed his brother. Come to thy nephew, Hatal, said he, or Mocri-ul-wahsh will slay him. Bring me Abjer, said Antar, and he sprang from the ground on his back, like an eagle, without putting his foot into the stirrup, and equipped himself in his

armour and his shining corslet. He attacked, and dismissed his nephew from the scene of contention, thus addressing Mocri-ul-wahsh. Eh! thou bastard, wouldst pride thyself in slaying children? As to me, by the faith of a noble Arab, had I enemies as numerous as the sands, like this youth, I'd heed them not. I am he, who will give thee enough of spear-thrusts and sword-blows; for the slaughter of this youth could have been no advantage to thee, neither could the extinction of his name have been any glory to thee. Thou art only come to seek me: come on, then; fight: perhaps thou mayest succeed. Shouldst thou take me a captive or slay me, the tribe of Abs will be unprotected, and from thy sword every calamity may overwhelm them; for when I am no more, there will not be a horseman to contend with thee in all this country. Now be just, and give up all outrage and foul play; and Antar rushed at Mocri-ul-wahsh, thus reciting:

"Hola! O Ibla, arise and behold me; see in me
"truth without guile. Arise, and behold my blow
"and thrust, like a flame, that burns in flashes.
"Mourn not for my wound, it is only like the rent
"in a man's garment. The thrust of man wounds
"not, it is only like the bore in the ear of a woman.
"But if my spear and my sword have sway, the
"skull and heaviest leathern mail are cleft. This
"day thou shalt see the descents of my sword, and
"the thrusts of my spear. Hey! O Mocri-ul-
"wahsh, return thee home, before thou remainest

" emboweled, I will soon relieve the Arabs from thee,
" and truly Maseeka shall remain my wife. I will
" plunder her property and slay her father, and I
" will leave her abode a desert, with my sword.
" My name is well known, east and west, and every
" horseman dreads a contest with me."

At hearing these verses, Mocri-ul-wahsh was enraged and indignant. Eh! thou coward-born, said he, is it consistent with thy greatness to address me in such language, and I the knight of Syria? and as he rushed upon Antar, he thus spoke:

" Hola! man of wily words, forth to the combat,
" and establish my fortune. Hola! race of Abs,
" ye shall acknowledge me. I am Mocri-ul-wahsh
" over the mountains. Soon will I slay Antar with
" the sword of conquest, and I will leave him dead
" on the sand. I will seize Ibla, and return home,
" and she shall serve my wife as her mistress. I
" will take Numan's camels, and will, in happy
" mood, return towards Maseeka. I am ever the
" knight of knights, and this day will I consum-
" mate my glory. This day Numan's armies shall
" route these troops, bewildered and powerless.
" The Arabs shall be left ague-struck at my prowess,
" and truly the warriors have already witnessed it.
" I am the hero of Syria, and of every land, and
" this day my exploits shall be renowned."

He had no sooner finished, than Antar shouted and rushed upon him; and they began a contest of swords and spears, at which the warriors were confounded, and the valiant heroes cried out, Heaven

protect us! The blow and the thrust, the struggle and assault, and the draughts of sudden death continued; their blows anticipated the messengers of death, and their shouts were like the thunder-crash in a cloud. Both combatants were nearly dead. Mocri-ul-wahsh was stupefied at Antar's prowess, and repented. Still he exhibited all his steadiness, and concealed the anguish and regret he felt. They persisted in these perils and horrors till the day departed: they were tired and exhausted; but debility had fallen on the shoulders of Mocri-ul-wahsh, for Antar had wounded him in two places. He desisted from the fight, and requested Antar to stop. No, said Antar, by the truth of Him who firmly rooted the mountains, there is no termination for thee but in success and the approach of death. He was aghast, and shuddered. O Aboolfawaris, he added, no one can resist my thrusts but you; but you have wronged me in breaking my spear: all I ask of you is to wait for me, whilst I repair to my party and take another spear; then will I return to you, and will not separate from you, till the affair be decided. I'll not let thee stir, continued Antar, and he assailed him, and recommenced the contest. But the troops crowded upon them, and drew their swords round them, each party forming conjectures of its lord. They continued in this state till midnight. Mocri-ul-wahsh felt assured of destruction, and knowing that Antar would not quit him but in death, he slackened his mare's bridle and fled, lanching into the waste and desert. Eh! O Ebe

Reeah, cried out Antar to Shiboob, overtake him before he roams wide over the waste: and Shiboob let out his feet. Antar followed him, and they were cut off from the army. In the meantime, Hadifah (that man of deceit and guile), as soon as the sound of Antar and Mocri-ul-wahsh was far distant from the scene of contention, cried out to his tribe and the surrounding horsemen, Come on, come on, now relieve the mind of the lord of empire, King Numan. Now cut off that black wittol, Antar. Thus the tribe of Fazarah outraged the tribe of Abs and Adnan, and attacked them on all quarters. The Absians shouted at the Fazareans, and descended upon them like a fall of rain under the night. Men met men, and heroes heroes—blood flowed and streamed—limbs were hacked off—men were knocked down on the plain—the armies of Numan also attacked—the mountains and the deserts were agitated, till brother knew not brother, and son recognised not his father. They continued plundering each others lives from the beginning of the night till the white streak of the dawn brightened, when every friend knew his comrade, and the foe was distinguished from the ally. King Cais looked round, north and south, but saw nothing of Antar. He was amazed and alarmed. The armies had occupied every road against them, and raised shouts at them in every direction. Apprehensive that the Absians would be dispersed over the barren waste, he had no other measure to adopt, but to cry out to them, O cousins, follow me to the sand-hills, and Mount

Saadi; it is impossible any longer to resist the shock of these armies. At hearing this, they followed him, abandoning their property and their families; and they assembled on the top of the sand-hill and Mount Saadi. The troops assaulted their tents, and plundered their property, and captured their wives and families; even captivity fell on the families of King Cais, and Modelilah, and Jemanah, and Ibla, and Shereehah, and Semiah were taken prisoners. Above all the women, most poignant was the grief and anguish of Ibla, Malik's daughter. The Arabs of Yemen threw down the dwellings of the Absians to their very foundations, and did not leave them the value of a halter, for some of them loaded their horses, and each person, too, carried away a horse-load besides; and in less than an hour they left the country a waste, and set out for the deserts and sand-hills; whilst the Absians remained looking at their wives driven away in bondage. No good can ever visit us now, said they to Cais, not a head will be raised up towards us, now that our wives and families are enslaved. O cousins, replied Cais, I had only recourse to this act, as I knew you were unable to continue the combat. Behold our property and our families driven away by the foe; come on now with me. And King Cais bared his head and made the attack; the Absians did the same; they precipitated themselves from the mountain-top, crying out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! and rushed down upon the armies of Numan. This was the calamitous and desperate state of the Absians, when

said Amarah to Rebia, Let us make our attack in the direction where Ibla is; perhaps we may rescue her from captivity and infamy, and love for Amarah, to the exclusion of other horsemen, infuse itself into her heart. Thou poltroon, thou driveller, said Rebia, dost not see thy mother and thy sister and thy brothers' wives are all prisoners, and that our property is pillaged, and that we are degraded before the world? By the faith of a generous Arab, were Antar but present in the contest, not one of all these disasters would have befallen us. It happened that Haml, son of Beder, had taken King Cais's mother, Temadhur, prisoner, and conducted her to a valley. Eh! son of Beder, cried Temadhur, for what purpose hast thou brought me down to this valley? That the Arabs may indulge foul suspicions of me? And that our hearts be pained and never at rest? My purpose, said Haml, is to ravish thee, and murder thy children on thy bosom. At this, death became easy to Temadhur. Alas! alas! she cried, woe to the small number of horsemen! On thee, O Cais, and thy brothers, be thy mother's blessing! At the word, she threw herself off the camel on the ground; she fell on her head, and her neck was broken; she instantly expired, whilst her maidens wept around her. During all this, the Absians were in the fiercest of the carnage, and the hottest of the combat of spears and swords: nearly destroyed and annihilated, they had resolved either to fly and seek the desert, or demand quarter and surrender themselves to King Numan, when lo! shouts arose in

front of the armies, and yells that convulsed the neighbouring wilds. King Cais and his warriors stopped awhile in suspense, conjecturing whence could issue these tremendous sounds. At that instant, the chief Antar, the generous hero, started forth in front of King Numan's army, and repulsed them over the wilderness; and with him was Mocri-ul-wahsh, the knight of Syria, fighting by Antar's side, and dealing blows like descending thunderbolts. The souls of the Absians revived, and their spirits recovered. Hey! cousins, said King Cais, here is our champion, Antar, and Mocri-ul-wahsh is our friend. Now, then, take courage for retaliation, and remove away your disgrace, and he who takes not kindly to the fight is no legitimate-born. Upon this, all the fire of the Absians was roused, and they returned to the combat of the foe, like tall sea-monsters. When Numan's armies beheld Antar return safe, and Mocri-ul-wahsh in his company, dealing blows Davidian corslets could not repel, and Shiboob occupying the way before them, they saw no expedient but in flight and escape; so they threw away all their booty, and lanched into the wilds and the wastes.

As soon as Mocri-ul-wahsh fled, under the night, Shiboob shot forth in pursuit of him, followed by Antar, and they continued to drive him over the desert, till morning dawned, when Mocri-ul-wahsh perceiving his life was in imminent danger, and that he could not escape, halted at once, saying, O Arab, thou wilt kill me, and thou hast destroyed thyself with fatigue.

I have no property to plunder, neither hast thou any retaliation to demand of me; neither can thy heart harbour any resentment against me. I never insulted thy cousin Ibla. I have nothing with me but my horse and my arms, that are dearer to me than life. Take them and forgive me, Aboolfawaris. I covet not thy mare, said Antar, my only object is to take thy life; for thou appearest a brave fellow and a valiant knight. Then will I return to these troops, and will not permit the first of them to join the last. O Aboolfawaris, continued Mocri-ul-wahsh, now I am aware that I was a fool among horsemen; never henceforward will I mount a stallion; never again will I be present in a battle, but I will seek the church of Bekhran, there to settle among the hermits, and I will renounce my projects on my bride Maseeka, daughter of the King of Hooran. O Mocri-ul-wahsh, said Antar, if such be thy story, I will wipe away that trouble from thy heart; I will go with thee to the land of Syria, and will seize thy bride for thee, were she even on the back of the clouds. O Aboolfawaris, said Mocri-ul-wahsh, all my hopes are centered in thee, that thou wouldst accept me as thy horseman, and receive me as thy slave. I will be thy ally in all thy calamities; and he dismounted from the back of his mare and hastened towards Antar, and kissed his feet in the stirrup. Antar also jumped off his Abjer; he embraced Mocri-ul-wahsh, and kissed him between the eyes, and having both vowed to preserve a mutual affection, and to plunder and spoil the

generous Arabs together, they mounted and returned, as we described, and attacked the armies as we mentioned. This therefore was the cause of the friendship of Antar and Mocri-ul-wahsh, and now let us return to our original story.

After the flight of Numan's forces, King Cais went up to Antar, and kissed him between the eyes. The Absians also being collected, they searched for their property and families, and they found Temadhur dead, and her damsels round her. On King Cais's demanding, who did this deed? they told him Haml, son of Beder. The light became dark in the eyes of the sons of Zoheir, and they swore they would not leave the Fazareans a tent to shelter them; not even a man to blow a fire. King Cais ordered the Absians to collect the property and return to the dwellings, whilst he mounted with half his warriors, and took to the right hand road, saying to Antar, Cousin, take thou the other half, and go the left, for I know the Fazarean horse must be somewhere here, and I should say they have not quitted the well of Hebat, and have not yet entered the wilds and the wastes. Antar acquiesced in King Cais's orders, and departed in company with Mocri-ul-wahsh, and the family of Carad. King Cais also departed, and as he wept for his mother, he thus recited:

"Alas! O eyes, weep torrents this day, over my "cheeks copiously, and abundantly. Alas! O eyes, "weep with me for Zoheir, and his son Malik; now "their glory is past. Alas! O eyes, announce

" their death in agonies of grief; the heart cannot
" longer bear it. Alas! O eyes, weep the loss of
" Shas, but yesterday reduced to dust after all his
" greatness. Calamities beguiled them; misfortune
" overwhelmed them; violence destroyed them.
" Ah! O race of Beder, ye have done a deed of
" universally acknowledged outrage in the murder
" of my mother; ye imagined ye would this day
" escape, and would be excited with glory and
" happiness; but the revolutions of death shall
" requite ye; we will come upon ye openly with
" our swords. Antar will come upon ye; he lusts
" to meet ye, were ye even far distant from him over
" the waste; were even the Emperor of Rome and
" Greece with ye, or the inhabitants of Syria and of
" verdant Europe. Were ye to come with all the
" dwellers on earth; were even Chosroe, King of
" Persia, to come with ye, we will meet ye with our
" sharp-edged scimitars, on our well-trained roan
" steeds. Sons of Beder! verily ye have outraged
" us, but we would have abandoned the contest.
" Cousins, this was not my intention; it was not
" in my heart, that this war should take place. It
" was ye that commenced; this calamity and op-
" pression ever originated in ye. Alas! alas! my
" grief for thee, O Temadhur! that accursed Haml,
" son of Beder, murdered thee. Soon will I extir-
" pate them all with my avenging sword; I will
" make their blood flow like a sea; I will retaliate
" on them, and they shall remain a tale for ages, as
" long as the world endures."

Having finished his verses, he went on till being at some distance from that land, he beheld the impression of Ghabra's hoof, Hadifah's mare; for when he fled with the tribe of Fazarah, the girths of his horse being loose, he dismounted, and tightened them; and the impression of Hadifah's feet remained also by the side of his mare's. King Cais recognised the impression.

Now Hadifah in his flight galloped on till he came to the well of Hebat. He had a son named Husn, who was at that time along with him, and he was a rare child. Hadifah pressed him to his bosom, and kissed him between the eyes, saying, O Husn, this is the kiss of farewell. My sole request of you, my son, is this; if you die after me, and have power over the Absians, murder their infants, enslave their women and families; let not a vestige remain of them; and know, O my son, that I am quitting this world, and have no other regret in my heart, but that fortune gave me not the means to exterminate their warriors, to enslave their wives and families, and to destroy their land and country. Thus saying, he threw himself down by the side of the well, with his warrior companions; and they were insensible to every thing till King Cais and his companions encompassed them.

Hadifah started up with the Fazareans; they attempted to mount their horses and fly, when lo! Antar and the Carad horsemen rushed between them and their steeds, then seized them all, and pinioned them. Antar and his companions retired to a different quarter, whilst King Cais advancing

with his brothers, cried out, Ah! ye sons of Beder, how oft have I had mercy on you, but you have ever betrayed me! How oft have I believed you, but you have falsified yourselves! I should like to see who will this day rescue you from death. Who will avert from you our cleaving sabres, and our sparkling spears? As to thee, Hadifah, remember what thy hands have done: may God curse thy father and thy mother! Remember the murder of the infants with thy arrows. As to thee, Haml, remember thy words to my mother—"My purpose is to ravish thee, and assassinate thy children on thy bosom."

On hearing this, Hadifah turned towards Cais, saying, Eh! son of Zoheir, why dost thou upbraid me with thy words? Cease these reproaches and reproofs, for I, by the faith of an Arab, had I sworn to thee a thousand times a day, I would have betrayed thee; and had I been able to murder thee, and murder thy brothers, never would I have pardoned. Now then do as thou listeth, act as thou wilt; leave not one of us to root out thy every vestige. As to me, before thou camest, I had proposed that we should slay each other; for we covet not life, whilst thou art on the face of the earth. But O my cousins, by the consanguinity of wombs that exists between us, do not bring us face to face—to confront each other is hard indeed: to catch each other's eye at such an hour is the severest of pangs. And Hadifah hung his head towards the ground,

and wept. Retaliation for children! cried Cais: come on, cousins, retaliate!

At the word, his brother Harith dismounted from his horse, and pierced Hadifah with his spear through the back, and the barb issued glittering through his bosom. He cut off his head, and remounted his horse, exclaiming, O retaliation for Malik! and thus he spoke:

"Dig up the grave of our brother; let him see "our exploits, when we grieve no more. O that "the earth were riven over him, that Malik might "see the deeds of men. We have left the chiefs "of Beder at Hebat, spouting out death at our "spear points. Hadifah and Haml, sons of Beder "and Jabir, with Yezid and Betal, them have we "left dead round the well, slain by our sharp In- "dian blades. We have slaughtered them, but it "was a cruel day to us, when death sped from "their arrows. They were the chieftains of men "wherever they went, and the lions of war in every "combat. They wronged us, and perfidy leaves "every land a desert, deprived of its inhabitants."

When Rebia saw what Harith, son of Zoheir, had done, he also dismounted, and crying out, O for retaliation for my brother Talib! he pierced Haml with his spear between the shoulders, and drove it out through his paps: then he pounced upon him, and cut off his head, and thus spoke:

"We have made the chiefs of Beder drink of the "cups of death with sword and spear at Hebat.

"We have encircled them with calamities, and they "staggered over the plain, but not intoxicated with "wine. In power they were the most puissant of "the two tribes, and in every undertaking their "resolution was abundant. When they mounted "their generous steeds, their horses stirred up the "dusty cloud in every desert. When they even gave "away a little in their bounty, the country was filled "with the land and sea of their liberality. Had "they no heirs, I should ever weep at what has "befallen them for their iniquity. But the youth "Haml, son of Beder, betrayed us, and treachery "roots out every recollection. How oft I warned "them, but they sinned again, and they have died "against my will. Fortune beguiled them; they "deceived us; but the revolutions of fortune de-"ceive every one. We are the losers by what we "have done. Alas! alas! to the sons of Beder! "By destroying their horsemen, we have cut off our "support, but I have eased the anguish of my heart "among them."

When Rebia had finished his verses, the retaliators followed him, and cut off the heads of the tribe of Fazarah, and left them convulsed in death on the banks of the well. King Cais observed the catastrophe, and his heart was appeased, till he repented of having slaughtered them, for they were his cousins. He wept bitterly over them, and at their miseries in the wild and waste, and thus he mourned their death:

"Truly the day of Hebat has brought evil upon

" us, and the oppressor has become the oppressed.
" This is the day of my losing the chiefs of the sons
" of Beder, and they were stars in the eyes of all
" beholders. . , I slew them because they wronged
" me, and for their former perfidy. They smote
" Dahis, and he was a generous steed: they mur-
" dered Malik, and he was a noble youth. I have
" slain them all, and I have assuaged the fire of my
" heart; but still the poisonous blast will increase it.
" O that before I had slain them, I had been slain,
" or had lost all my sense of joy. By their perfidy,
" they injured us: we have oppressed the whole
" body, but their day was fixed by fate. My an-
" guish increased when I heard their cries, and
" when we are no more, who will defend our
" women*?"

When King Cais had finished his verses, the Absians shed torrents of tears. Just then, Husn, son of Hadifah, presented himself to the King, and kissed the ground. Then drawing his sword, he surrendered it to Cais, and wept as he stood before him, saying, If it will appease thy heart, slaughter me thyself. But King Cais burst into tears, and said, O Husn, hadst thou done this before, I should have stretched out my hand against thee, but the business has been pushed too far already. Thou shalt lord over these people in the place of thy father; I will protect thee, and respect thee.

* The destruction of this family at the well of Hebat is mentioned by Abulfeda.

And King Cais remained there that night till the morning lustre shone, when he set out for the land of Abs. But they had scarcely left that spot, when lo! a dust arose. See, what means this dust? cried Cais. The horsemen moved on, and returning, informed him that it was the dust of the women of Fazarah, with their daughters and infants, who were coming to take retaliation for their husbands. They are right, said Cais, for we have tortured them in their husbands. But turning towards Husn, he added, O my son, keep them off; let them bury their dead, and let them demand the aid of God in their distresses. Upon this Husn returned, and sent away the women, whilst King Cais continued his journey home, full of woe and anguish, and thus he gave vent to his sorrows:

"I am returning, but the sleep of my eyes will "torment me. My resolution is diminished; my "courage is languid, at what the sons of Beder, son "of Amroo, have suffered of infamy at the well of "Hebat. We have tainted the water with the "blood of the tribe, and its colour has appeared "like the Judas tree. I have appeased my spirit "on Haml, son of Beder, and my sword has as-"suaged me on Hadifah. They were of our fa-"mily, but they acted perfidiously to us, and the "perfidy of relatives can never be forgiven. They "excited the war of enmity and aggression in the "horse-race; on the day of the match they were "obstinate in their hostility to us. So they have "suffered as the family of Abdul Modan suffered.

" Had they asked for mercy, I should have forgiven " them; but they persisted, and their death was at " hand. Though I have relieved my anguish with " them, still I have cut off my own support, and " my own strength."

As King Cais spoke, tears streamed from the eyes of all the warriors. They continued their journey till they reached the dwellings, and alighted at the tents; and when they were quietly established, the warriors came to King Cais to condole with him about the tribe of Fazarah, and to congratulate him on his victory and triumph for seven days.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

On the eighth day came Antar and Mocri-ul-wahsh unto Cais, accompanied by the Absian chieftains. O King, said they, how long these tears, and this affliction? The catastrophe of thy foes proceeds from thy good fortune. It is over: it is now incumbent on thee to make feasts and entertainments, and take advantage of this period of festivity.

Thus they continued till they made him drink some wine; and on the second day he gave a magnificent feast at the lake of Zat-ul-irsad, where the whole tribe of Abs was collected; and when they had eaten, the wine was brought to them, and they conversed about their battles, commemorating their victories. O my cousins, said King Cais, that was our severest day, when we engaged the tribe of Fazarah; for on that day also drew near the armies of King Numan, with Mocri-ul-wahsh, the Knight of Syria, and no one relieved us from disasters, but our cousin Antar, and Mocri-ul-wahsh, on the day he became Antar's friend; for then he performed deeds to be recorded. Mocri-ul-wahsh, on hearing this, started on his legs, and kissing the King's hand, O King, said he, I used formerly to reckon myself amongst the valiant in war, and in the charge, till I was overpowered by this swarthy knight, and this

lion of death; but when I tasted of his combat, I knew my opinion of horsemen was false, and that I was a fool among the brave; for bravery is divided into two sorts: the first belongs to all mankind, the second is exclusively Antar's.

Antar sprang up, and kissing him between the eyes, exclaimed, Witness for me, ye chiefs of Abs and Adnan, and all ye here present, that I am for ever the slave of this hero, and all the wealth and property my power shall obtain shall be made over to him; let no one interfere on this point, and verily, I have engaged on my existence, that I will effect his union with his bride Maseeka, daughter of the King of Hooran. To-morrow will I commence this undertaking; for ye all know, that I ever assist the union of absent lovers, and how anxious I am to relieve the afflictions of those who sigh for each other; thus, perhaps, the Lord Creator may facilitate my business; but I do not speak thus in the way of complaint or opposition to fate; for that time will come, sooner or later, either by death or by a meeting and realization of hopes. And as he spoke, he wept. When Malik, his uncle, beheld his grief, O son of my brother, he cried, running towards him in the excess of his malice and guile, by the faith of an Arab, were I not afraid of interrupting the feast, I would wed my daughter, Ibla, to thee before to-morrow. But when the feasts of King Cais are concluded, we will consult about our affairs, and the cup of joys shall draw nigh. Thou knowest, O Aboolfawaris, thou art our protector in every peril,

and from every foe. Moreover, we would have already terminated this business, and consummated all thy hopes, had it not been for the arrival of King Numan's troops, and the convulsions of the times. But now our troubles are removed from us, and by thy sword every opponent, every enemy, has been put to death, and there remains no one, black or white, to thwart our wishes. No! no! exclaimed King Cais, turning towards him, these excuses I will no longer admit or endure. As he spoke, he gave the cup to his wine-bearer, adding, listen to the words I now say. O Wine-bearer! lock up this cup, and keep it, for, by the faith of an Arab, I will not again drink of wine, or interest myself in any one affair, till my cousin, Antar, be wedded unto his cousin, and his affliction be removed. All the he and she camels I possess shall be supplied for seven days, as also fodder for the horses. Arise this moment, he added, addressing Malik, and prepare thy daughter. Malik quitted the presence of King Cais, expressing his obedience and submission; and the whole assembly dispersed, Antar's friends rejoicing, and his enemies sorrowing. When the family of Carad heard of Ibla's marriage, they were delighted, men and women, daughters and sons; they commenced their merry-making and joys, and grief was banished. Malik knew not what to do, and he felt aware his perfidy and machinations could avail him nought; for should he resist, the morrow would see him dead; so he repaired to his wife. Mother of Amroo, said he, prepare for thy

daughter's wedding, for she, in a few days, will be married to her cousin, Antar. I verily blush before him, for he has acted so generously towards us; but I have requited him with evil, and particularly at this time, when he has repulsed King Numan's armies; for had it not been for Antar's sword, we should all have been dispersed over the wilds and the wastes. When Ibla's mother heard this from her husband, she rejoiced on her daughter's account, for she loved Antar exceedingly for his intrepidity and superior excellence; she was, moreover, convinced that Ibla could suit no one but Antar, for he alone could protect her. Bring Antar to me, said Malik to his son. Amroo went forth and told Antar his father wanted him. So Antar sprang up and put on his finest clothes, and departing with Amroo, presented himself to his uncle, who arose and embraced him, treating him with great distinction, and saying, Nephew, invite thy friends, and thy comrades, and thy associates, that we may prepare thy wedding, and accomplish thy wishes. At these expressions, Antar's bosom dilated, and he was full of joy. He instantly started forth, and returning home, sent for Oorwah. O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, said Antar, my uncle has consented to my marriage, and has directed me to invite my friends and confederates, and in three days he will acquiesce in my desires, but I would put it off for ten days. O Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah, take advantage of the opportunity, and let our hearts be relieved of this anxiety. O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, continued Antar, I

wish to send to all my friends, as I fear they may otherwise reproach us, particularly the chief Bostam; for he suffered much with us, in the affairs of the Kendehans. The least, said Oorwah, that you can wish to slaughter on your marriage, will be ten thousand he and she camels, for thy guests will be numerous. O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, said Antar, ten thousand shall not suffice for the slaves alone; the least that I shall slaughter will be twenty thousand she camels, and twenty thousand he camels; twenty thousand sheep, and twenty thousand goats, and a thousand lions, for my guests will be many. I wish to make at Ibla's wedding five separate feasts; I will feed the birds and the beasts, the men and the women, the girls and boys, and not a single person shall remain in the whole country but shall eat at Ibla's marriage festival. Well, do as you please, Aboolfawaris, said Oorwah. Now write, added Antar, to the chief Bostam, a letter, with my good wishes, to request his company, with all the warriors of the tribe of Shiban; and a second to Hassan, the Mazinite; and a third to the chief Hijar, son of Aamir, the Kendehan; and a fourth to Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian; and a fifth to the chief Moshajaa, son of Hosan, the Khoolamian; and a sixth to King Niamet, son of Ashtar, lord of the land of Sawdah, and the volcano mountain. Thus he wrote numerous letters to all the Arab tribes, and the number of letters he despatched to the tribes was three hundred and sixty, to the three hundred and sixty tribes of Arabs of the

cultivated and uncultivated plains; and whilst he was making preparations, O Ebe-ool-Ebyez, said he to Oorwah, I wish you would go to the land of Syria, and procure some wine for us. Oorwah expressed his obedience, and mounting with his men, set out for the land of Syria, till he reached Azeilem, now called Mazeireeb, where he staid with his people, expecting the wine merchants. As to King Cais, he ordered his slaves to bring forth his tents, and pitch the canopies and standards, and thus the whole tribe of Abs exhibited all their riches; and it was a wonderful day in the display of the quantity of different coloured tents and decorated dwellings. The tents for the men were put on one side; on the other were the tents for the women; and they felt secure from the night depredators of the time, and the revolutions of events. Antar was at the summit of his happiness and delight, congratulating himself on his good fortune and perfect felicity, all trouble and anxiety being now banished from his heart. Praise be to God, the dispenser of all grief from the hearts of virtuous men! Antar every day mounted his horse, and roamed over the mountains and the hollows, hunting lions and tigers, till he had taken seven hundred lions and two hundred tigers, which he secured in a valley, and he stationed a number of slaves over them to feed them. He then exhibited the pavilion which he had brought with him from Chosroe, and ordered his slaves to pitch it for Ibla; and when spread out, it occupied half the land of Shurebah, for it was the load of forty camels; and

there was an awning at the door of the pavilion, under which four thousand of the Absian horse could skirmish. It was embroidered with burnished gold, studded with precious stones and diamonds, interspersed with rubies, and emeralds set with rows of pearls, and there was painted thereon a specimen of every created thing, birds, and trees, and towns, and cities, and seas, and continents, and beasts, and reptiles; and whoever looked at it was confounded by the variety of the representations, and by the brilliancy of the silver and gold; and so magnificent was the whole, that when the pavilion was pitched, the land of Shurebah and Mount Saadi were illuminated by its splendor. The Absians produced their richest stores; in short, the dwellings appeared like a flower-garden; the whole country was in agitation; and the sun shone with reflected rays. The happiest of all, at Antar's marriage-feast, were King Cais and his brothers, and also the family of Carad; for these days were like so many holidays to them. As to the family of Zeead, their hearts were bursting. Oorwah was not absent more than three days, and on the fourth day he appeared, and with him abundance of wine; and whilst they were in this state, behold, some she camels advanced, and he camels came forward from the valleys and the mountains, amounting to sixty thousand she camels, and sixty thousand he camels; and Antar ordered Shiboob to conduct three thousand of them to the mountains, there to slaughter them, and skin them, and feed the birds. Shiboob obeyed,

and went to the mountains, where he slaughtered the camels; and as the slaves flayed them of their hides, Shiboob ascended the highest mountain, and cried out in a loud voice, O ye birds of prey, ye vultures of death! come down and eat of Antar's marriage-feast; he this day invites ye all. The next day, he took two thousand more, and slaughtered them on the mountain-tops, crying out, O ye voracious lions, ye mighty tigers, all of ye come down and eat of the marriage-feast of Antar, son of Shedad, for he this day invites ye all. After this, Antar ordered the butchers to slaughter he and she camels, and sheep, and fattened deer, and to prepare every species of viand, and to make the wine to flow, and to decorate the dwellings of his guests and friends for four days, when lo! there appeared a dust. Antar and the Absians mounted to meet it, and the dust opened and discovered the chief Bostam, accompanied by a thousand horsemen of the tribe of Shiban. Antar saluted him and his comrades, and conducted them to a magnificent tent, and they presented them meat of the flesh of sheep and deer. The next day, also, was seen advancing towards them a cloud of dust, which the Absians went out to meet, when lo! it discovered Hassan the Mazinite, Prince Malik's foster brother, and in his rear were seven thousand horsemen, all mailed and armed. Antar received them, and conducted them to a magnificent tent, supplying them abundantly with meat and wine. They reposed till morning, when lo! a dust again arose: Antar and

the Absians went out to meet it, and Maadi Kereb, the Zebeedian, appeared, accompanied with nine thousand horsemen of the tribes of Zebeed, Khitaam, and Morad. Antar received and accommodated them with a superb dwelling: he treated them most hospitably, and supplied them with abundance of wine. They passed a night of joy and festivity; and in the morning there appeared another dust, and it discovered a knight close-visored and perfectly formed. The warriors marked him, and behold it was the chief Hijar, son of Aamir, the Kendehan, accompanied with eight thousand heroes of Kendeh, all famed for their bravery and firmness. The Absians and Antar received them, and saluting them, conducted them to a magnificent mansion, and presented them meat and wine, paying them every attention. On the next day there was seen another dust, and it cleared away from the chief Moshajaa, son of Hosan, the Khoolanian, attended by seven thousand horsemen of the tribe of Khoolan. The tribe of Abs and Adnan received him, and made him alight at a splendid tent, overwhelming them with meat and wine. Antar was delighted at their arrival, and treated them all with distinguished hospitality. The Absians continued in this state of mirth and merriment, receiving in succession all the Arab tribes of Adnan and Cahtan. (Were I to write down, says Asmaee, all the Arab tribes that assisted at Antar's nuptials, the tongue would fail, and the hearer be wearied, and the book be filled; so we have abridged the account.)

The Arabs continued to flock into the land of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, till the wilderness and desert were crammed, as also the mountains and sand-hills. Praise be to God, the enricher of mankind! Antar ordered the butchers to slaughter night and day, and the cooks to cook day and night, and the slaves to prepare bread and pastry: and all the tribe of Abs stood waiting in attendance on the Arab chiefs, and inhabitants of the wilds and wastes, even to King Cais himself and all his brothers. There were reckoned, by one who was present at Antar's marriage, one hundred and forty-five thousand warriors, lords of the sword-blow and spear-thrust; and the total of those who were present, men and women, amounted to three hundred thousand. Power is with the only God, great and munificent! On this account, Antar's wedding was known far and wide in those days; and when these tribes were assembled, the country was too confined for them; so that brother could not see his brother, nor son distinguish where stood his father. Antar ordered the chamberlains to spread carpets, that the victuals might not spoil, and that they might eat walking, eat standing, eat on horseback, eat sitting, and eat in their sleep: and there was not one but was satisfied with every variety of meat. (Whereas, says Asmaee, I was at Mecca when I heard of Antar's nuptials; I hastened to the land of Shurebah, that I might be an eye-witness, and write down what I saw; and when I arrived, I perceived an infinity of things that had never been mentioned

before; and I reckoned that Antar had expended in barley, and wheat, and millet, and other grain, seven hundred and seventy Irdebbs*.)

They thus continued in constant enjoyment: the horsemen every morning mounted their steeds, flourishing their arms and tilting on the plains, till the heat became too powerful, when they returned to the tents, where they found provisions prepared, minced meats served up, and victuals all ready and cooked. They ate, and the wine-bearers supplied them with generous old wine; and thus they went on seven days and nights. On the eighth day, the chief Bostam sprang up on his legs, and kissing the ground before Antar, presented him the presents he had brought with him, consisting of one hundred of the finest horses, with their accoutrements and armour; fifty balls of the most fragrant musk; fifty dishes of ambergris, and a hundred chains of the purest gold; a hundred robes of velvet, two thousand she camels, and two thousand he camels, with one hundred female slaves; and thus he addressed him:

"May heroes rejoice in the continuance of thy "glory, and the noble witness the abundance of thy "greatness! may every day be renewed to thee in "life, and every joy be in its return more plentiful! "Thine is a palm for mankind, that gives comfort "with wealth, and every bounty; thy hand is well

* One Irdebb is equal to fifteen bushels.

" known, and its celebrated munificence testifies it.
" May the generosity of thy right hand never fail,
" as my heart will never fail in its love for thee:
" may this wedding be propitious to thee amongst
" men. O knight of knights, and of noble heroes,
" accept the presents of one most grateful to thee.
" O Aboolfawaris, thou most merciful of warriors,
" mayest thou never fail in thy beneficence! may
" thy joys abound to thy gratification, and may thy
" abundance ever increase."

Antar accepted his presents, and seated him according to his rank. Then the chief Maadi Kereb advanced, and kissing the ground, presented one thousand she camels, and one thousand he camels; five hundred horses, with their accoutrements and armour; one hundred robes of crimson silk; twenty strings of jewels; twenty dishes of ambergris; twenty balls of the most precious musk; one hundred male slaves, and as many female slaves; and as he requested Antar's acceptance, he thus spoke:

" This day, its light is illumined by thy nuptials,
" and the glory of its lustre is raised by thy happy
" star. O Antar of horsemen, rejoice in the ac-
" complishment of every hope and wish. The
" night, whenever thou comest, loses its obscurity;
" and the desert, wherever thou art, loses its barren-
" ness! Glory, then, above all men, in thy pro-
" sperity; all confess thy greatness is their greatness.
" In thy beneficence accept, my lord, a present

"from one, whose possessions are all thine. Kindly "regard thy slave, who is come to thee, and "shouldst thou refuse him, it will prove his ruin."

Antar thanked him for his verses, and accepting his present, seated him according to his rank. Then came forward the Chief Hidjar, son of Aamir, the Kendehan, and kissing the ground before Antar, he presented one thousand she camels, and two thousand he camels; five hundred horses, with their accoutrements and armour; five strings of jewels; one hundred robes of twisted velvet; twenty balls of musk; five thousand sheep; one hundred male slaves, and a hundred female; and thus he spoke:

"The generosity of all generosity is seen, when "thou advancest with a shout; and mankind has "proved it at the time thou chargest in the field. "Thou art extolled on high, at the moment when "every great man, noble as he is, cries out to thee "for aid. Thou art celebrated for thy liberality in "the eloquence of Persia, for the hand of the most "bountiful is found niggardly by thee. Thou art "a youth whose every thought, disposition, word, "and act are magnificent, in spite of thy malicious "foes. Thou art a youth that hast mounted to the "summit of praise, lofty as it is; and must bear its "accumulated weight, heavy as it is. O Knight of "Battle, may thy nuptials be propitious to thee! "thou paragon of horsemen, at the moment thou "leadest the charge! Accept, I conjure thee, this "present from me, and excuse its insufficiency, O "my lord and my friend!"

Antar thanked him for his address, and accepting his present, seated him according to his rank. Then advanced Hassan, the Mazinite, who kissed the ground, and presented seven hundred horses, with their accoutrements and armour; and three thousand he and she camels; two thousand goats, and two thousand sheep; twenty velvet garments; twenty necklaces; twenty balls of musk, and twenty dishes of ambergris; with a hundred male slaves, and as many female; and thus he spoke:

"Shall others congratulate thee? but I will never "cease to felicitate thee. O Knight of Knights, in "the day of horrors thou art the lion, and the van- "quisher of the brave. The chiefs have accorded "thee the inheritance of eloquence; 'tis well, for "thou art wiser than Sohban* himself: accept these "presents of one bound in gratitude to thee, O thou "my refuge, my crown, and my defender!"

Antar thanked him for his address, and accepting his presents, seated him according to his rank. Then sprang forward Moshajaa, Chief of the tribe of Khoolan, and presenting a thousand horses, with all their accoutrements, and four thousand he and she camels; ten thousand sheep; ten silk cushions; a hundred velvet robes; fifty balls of musk, and fifty dishes of ambergris—he requested his acceptance, and thus addressed him:

"Hail to thy hand, that has no bounds! Prose "and rhyme fail to express my thanks. How can

* A king celebrated for his wisdom.

"gratitude be conveyed to the noble hero, when the "Pisces and the Lyra fall short of it? He pos- "sesses those virtues of liberality, could I describe "them, the age would be adorned, and fortune "would boast thereof. His fingers are the dew, and "his munificence the falling shower: his virtues a "garden, and his words flowers. Rejoice in the "happiness that may bring thee glory; and nuptials "that may produce festivity and triumph! Accept, "then, I beseech thee, of me, this present; and ex- "tend thy pardon, my lord, for its insufficiency."

Antar accepted his presents, and seated him according to his rank; when up sprang the Chief Obad, and presenting five hundred horses with their housings and armour; three thousand he and she camels; five thousand goats; two thousand sheep; two hundred dishes of ambergris; two hundred balls of precious musk, and a thousand robes of crimson silk; with one hundred male slaves, and as many female; he thus expressed his admiration of Antar:

"Is there for judgment any justice-throne but "thine? Beyond thy court is there any hope amongst "man? Had a man wished to express praise or "gratitude before this, rhymes would have failed. "O, by the Lord of Heaven, were all languages to "be heaped together, poetry would fall short of "what I feel. Thou art the man, were it not for "whose sword, there would be no refuge for the "hopes of mortals. Marriage is noble among men, "and truly in thee is proved what futurity will never "produce. Thy success is peculiarly thine own;

" no scene of glory is there, but thine arm was there
" seen extended—munificence, resolution, and con-
" vincing wisdom! What is the ram? or the lion?
" or the sword? the hero of horsemen, when the
" armies close; the lion of armies, when the armies
" close. As to his virtues, their liberality every pe-
" titioner has witnessed; but on the day of battle,
" they are absynth. He protects those who beg
" his mercy; his benignity enriches before they even
" ask. Accept then the presents of one, who is come
" to thee in joy—whose power truly depends on
" thee. Never will I praise any one but thee; for
" in the qualities of thy glory I shall cite proverbs
" among men. O thou, my friend, my associate!
" may nothing ever disturb or taint thy happiness!"

Antar expressed his thanks, and congratulated him, and accepting his presents, seated him according to his rank. Then came forward Niamet, son of Ashtar, who presented a thousand horses, with their accoutrements and armour; and a hundred necklaces of jewels, and a thousand crimson silk robes; five thousand he and she camels; twenty thousand sheep; two hundred male slaves, and as many female; one hundred balls of precious musk; one hundred dishes of ambergris. And as he requested Antar's acceptance, he thus honoured him:

" To describe thee would require all we can say
" or write. It is no wonder that we are prolix or
" flowery. Thy deeds and thy greatness must ever
" be known: why should we not detail thy eulogy,
" and compose verses on thee? If indeed there be

" no end to words, there is also no term to thy vir-
" tues. Should glory itself aim at thy height, ex-
" ceeding the distance of the stars, it might approach
" thee; and should it not reach so high, thou hast
" attained that supremacy we cannot describe, how-
" ever we extend our expressions and our rhymes.
" Man is totally unable to praise the worth of a
" hero, who puts at nought every eulogist, and
" every admirer. As to his actions, his bounty to
" his foes is cited from east to west. Pens of spears
" have inscribed his generosity, and tongues of In-
" dian swords have spoken of him in the East. His
" scimitar has raised him to a pinnacle of glory, on
" the very extremity of fame, far and near. He rides a
" high-mettled steed that never falters, and deals out
" death to the enemy. May this marriage be au-
" spicious to thee, thou Knight of war, and mayst
" thou succeed in every attempt! May the world
" be ever a garden under thy command, and by thy
" bounty may it be refreshed with showers! Ac-
" cept from me a present that I offer thee, for thou
" art skilled and daring in every deed. May thy
" existence never fail us! thou art our object, and
" we consider thy generosity as the utmost boundary
" of our wishes."

The heroes and warriors were much delighted. Antar thanked him for his address, and accepting his presents, seated him according to his rank.

Now when all the Arab chiefs had presented their offerings, each according to his circumstances, Antar rose, and called out to Mocri-ul-wahsh; O Knight

of Syria, said he, let all the he and she camels, high priced horses, and all the various rarities I have received this day, be a present from me to you. But the perfumes of ambergris, and fragrant musk, belong to my cousin Ibla; and the slaves shall form my army and troops. (The number of slaves Antar received that day amounted to two thousand five hundred; to whom he gave as many horses, and as many damsels, and also arms and weapons; and they all mounted when he rode out, and halted when he halted.)

When the Arab chiefs heard Antar's harangue, and how he had given away all his property, they marvelled at his generosity; and they requested him to terminate his nuptials, fearful of any treachery or opposition. O Arabs, said King Cais, your earnestness shall not be thrown away upon us, nor your visit to us be unavailing; for ye are the horsemen of magnanimity, and joy should ever succeed to difficulties. It was the justice of fortune that released Antar from the bonds of servitude, and endued him with liberality, intrepidity, and boldness in arms; and he is become our champion, and the remover of all our pains and sorrows.

Rebia was highly indignant at this speech; and as King Cais observed him, O Rebia, he added, verily Antar deserves even more than this, for he has been patient, and has never failed us; he has protected our wives and our families; and there is nothing to be done but to conclude the marriage.

And when the Arabs heard this, they kissed the

ground before him. Bravo! exclaimed Antar, springing forward from behind them. All ye that are present here, know that I am the slave of this Absian tribe; I will redeem it with my life and my property from every distress, and every calamity; from every misfortune and every adversity: if they marry my cousin to me, I consent; if they still resist, I will have patience; if they wish to delay me, it is for them to command; but whatever they do, I shall still be the object of insult and envy. O Aboolfawaris, exclaimed they all, there is no opposition to the nuptials—thou art our knight and our champion. Upon which Antar ordered ten thousand he and she camels to be slaughtered that day, and also twenty thousand sheep, and twenty thousand goats, and a thousand lions and lionesses.

Then mounted the Chief Bostam, with the tribe of Shiban, and the Chief Hijar, with the people of Kendeh; and Maadi Kereb, with the tribe of Zebeed; and Moshajaa, with the tribe of Khoolan; and Hatal, with the tribe of Ghiftan; and also King Cais, with the tribe of Abs and Adnan; and Hassan, the Mazinite; and Rowdhah, son of Meneea; and King Niamet, son of Ashtar; and Rebia, son of Zeead; and also all the horsemen: and the whole desert was illumined with the flash of helmets, and armour, and corslets. They gave the bridles to their horses, and tilted and jousted with each other with barbless spears, till mid-day. (It was now the season of the spring, and the country was enamelled with the lustre of the new-born flowerets.)

And the sun being risen to the meridian vault of heaven, the warriors returned to their tents and the dwellings that were fixed for them: there the dinner was already served up for them, and there was not one but found before him a portion of the lion's flesh, of which the men ate till they were satisfied, and then came the wine-bearers round with cups and goblets.

Afterwards, Antar directed them to lay out a second range of tables, covered with victuals for the poor, and the orphans, and the widows. His orders were obeyed; and the herald proclaimed, Whoever wants meat and provisions, let him repair to the kitchen of Antar, son of Shedad. So all the girls and boys, women and children, advanced; and Antar stood up with his brothers, waiting on all the noble guests amongst the slaves and attendants: but King Cais prohibited Antar from serving in such menial offices.

Now there was a curious custom current among the Arabs at that period. The night on which a bridegroom should wed his wife, they brought a quantity of camel packsaddles, and heaped them one upon the other, decorating them with magnificent garments. Here they conducted the bride, and having seated her on high, they said to the bridegroom, Come on, now for thy bride! And the bridegroom rushed forward to carry her off, whilst the youths of the tribe drawn up in line, right and left, with staves and stones in their hands, as soon as the bridegroom rushed forwards, began beating

and pelting him, and doing their utmost to prevent his reaching his wife. If a rib or so were broken in the affair, it was well for him; were he killed, it was his destiny. But should he reach his wife in safety, the people quitted him, and no one attempted to approach him. (I inquired about this circumstance, says Asmaee, and what it was they were about. Asmaee, they answered, the meaning of this is to exhibit the bride to the warriors, that should her husband die, any one else might take a fancy to her, and take her off.)

At this period, as Antar's nuptials were began, King Cais assembled his brothers; Know, sons of my father and my mother, said he, this night is the night of Ibla's appearing in state to Antar; and I fear that some enemy of his may betray him: but this custom has prevailed for ages past. My opinion, said Harith, is, that this custom should be abolished with respect to Antar, and renewed with every one else.

King Cais saw the expediency of such advice, and accordingly ordered the herald to proclaim to the assembled nations, that King Cais, King of the tribe of Abs and Adnan, ordains that every one who attends Antar's nuptials with a sword, or staff, or any instrument, shall be put to death, and his property be given to Antar: and I will excuse, says the King, those who make offerings, and I will be impartial to those who take warning: for I have abolished this custom at the nuptials of Antar; but I shall reinforce it on every future occasion. Thus

proclaimed the herald throughout the tents of the tribe of Abs and Adnan. The Arabs heard it, and all Antar's friends were exceedingly pleased at the precaution thus taken.

Now when Amarah heard that Antar was about to consummate his marriage with Ibla, he was seized with a violent fever, and an ague-fit suddenly fell upon his whole body. He sent for forty of his slaves, and exciting their avarice, ordered them to be on the watch the night of Ibla's marriage with Antar, that they should rush unawares upon him, and put him to death. They went away in order to execute Amarah's commands; but hearing the proclamations among the tents, that no one should attend Antar's wedding with arms, they returned, and told Amarah of the circumstance. Then his heart burst—he started up, and ran to his brother Rebia, exclaiming, O my brother, I am dying. What's the matter now, my fine fellow? said Rebia. Amarah related his disappointment; but added to Rebia, You have frequented the privacies of kings, and have travelled over lands and countries: so explain to me some deadly herb, that I may give it this slave in such a manner that no one may know any thing about it. Amarah, said Rebia, I know of an electuary, which one of King Numan's confidants explained to me, saying, Rebia, this is an electuary; should any one eat thereof, it will extinguish the burning warmth of his body; and, for one day and night, should it circulate through his frame, he will sink into a state of inanition and lethargy.

Brother, said Amarah, give me some of this electuary, that I may give it this black Antar to eat. And who will give it Antar to eat? said Rebia. My female slave Kehla, said Amarah; Khemisa, Ibla's handmaiden, is very fond of her, and this day, very early, she will go to assist her. Upon this Rebia gave Amarah the electuary, which he took, and returned home.

Now this slave-girl Kehla was in high favour with Amarah, for she was in lieu of Ibla to him, and when he came home he sent for her. Kehla, said he, I have an important affair for you, and I cannot trust its execution to any hands but yours. What's this mighty affair, my lord? said Kehla. I want you, continued Amarah, to take this electuary with you, when Khemisa invites you to the feast, and take special care to mix it with Antar's meat, that he may eat of it. But, my lord, said Kehla, what are the effects of this medicine, should any one eat it? It is not deadly? I should never escape out of the hands of the family of Carad. No, no! O Kehla, said Amarah, it is not deadly; it is a drug to excite hatred, and you well know what I have suffered on account of Ibla, and now at last Antar has got the better of me; he has taken her by force, and all my wish is, that he may eat this drug, so that he may hate her. Kehla expressed her obedience to his commands, and Amarah was all joy and delight, recommending her to keep the affair secret.

Kehla took the drug, and set out for Antar's

feast; and when she arrived, she saw one of the Carad slaves, called Naeem, standing in attendance amongst the other slaves; round his head was a crimson turban, and he wore one of Antar's honorary robes. Kehla was passionately in love with him; and when she saw him so fine, she said to herself, 'Tis true Amarah loves me, but he will not let me go out to the pastures and meet my beloved—he says this medicine is good to produce hatred, so the best thing I can do will be to give it my master, Amarah, himself to eat, that he may hate me, and let me go out to the pastures; and I will let Antar be happy. So she went to Khemisa, Ibla's hand-maiden, and related what had occurred with Amarah; and giving her the medicine, Khemisa, said she, there is nothing to be done but for you to infuse this drug into the meat, and take it to my master, Amarah; for he will not refuse it from your hands. Khemisa acquiesced, and taking the drug from her, put it into a platter full of meat, smothered with saffron and gravy; and having thus melted the drug in the meat, she carried away the dish, and went in search of the Chief Amarah, before whom she placed it. As soon as he saw Khemisa, he asked her about Kehla. My lord, she replied, I left her waiting on my master, Antar; and I have brought you this meat. Amarah was highly pleased, and said, Let not Kehla delay giving Antar the medicine to eat; and let the slave be a Black greasy Pot, as Rebia has said. And he ate up the whole meat; in the

excess of his joy licking the very dish with his tongue. However the meat was not long settled in his stomach before he felt the effects of the drug.

And now when the Arabs assembled for Antar's marriage had eaten their dinner, the cups of wine were brought round to them; the men and women were promiscuously moving together; the girls came forth, and the slave-women were amusing themselves, enjoying the happy moments. Hola! cried the matrons and the virgins, we will not remain covered on Antar's marriage. And they threw aside their veils, and the full moons appeared in all their lustre; and they flaunted the branches of their forms in the excess of their delight; and it was a famous day for them. By the faith of an Arab, said the matrons and virgins, we will not remain thus concealed behind these curtains; the doors shall not be shut upon us; we will see Ibla in her magnificence, and we will walk in her train, and make our offerings to her and Antar, and we will not keep a dirhem or a dinar to ourselves; for a happier night than this can never be, and no one but a madman would miss it.

When the women of the tribe of Çarad heard this, they were alarmed for the scandal and censure that would thus be occasioned: so they resolved to finish Ibla's ceremony. They clothed her in the most magnificent robes and Chosroweean garments, and superb necklaces; they placed the coronet of Chosroe on her head, and tiaras round her forehead. Ibla was remarkable for her beauty and loveliness: the

tirewomen surrounded her, and they requested Antar to let her come forth in state. He gave them permission, whilst his brothers and slaves stood round the pavilion with their swords, and javelins, and weapons. He ordered them to place a lofty throne for Ibla in front of the pavilion. They executed his commands—they lighted brilliant and scented candles before her, and spread afar the odour of aloes and camphor, and scattered the perfumes of ambergris and musk—the lights were fixed in candlesticks of gold and silver—the torches blazed—and whilst the women shouted and raised their voices to whistles and screams, Ibla came forth in state. In her hand she bore a drawn sword, whose lustre dazzled the eyesight. All present gave a shout; whilst the malicious and ill natured cried aloud, What a pity that one so beautiful and fair should be wedded to one so black! As to the Chief Amarah, he felt that his life had quitted his body, and the universe appeared all darkened to him; he was stupefied, and in the greatest consternation; and though he wished to stand up, he fell down, for an arrow from Ibla's eyes shot him, and he was upset. I know, said he to himself, this black slave will be happy with Ibla; but I must put a stop to this business; so he ran home, and took two necklaces of jewels, and went with them to Simiah, Shedad's wife. O Simiah, said he, I have a particular favour to beg of you; I wish you would fulfil it, and take these two necklaces of jewels. What is it you want, my lord? said Simiah. What I want of you, said

Amarah, is to say to Zebeeba, Antar's mother, God forbid you should do such an act, O Zebeeba! If she asks you what you mean by this speech, tell her, Your son Antar has endured much vexation; but his trouble is not lost, for Ibla, after having been his foster-sister, is now become his wife. Zebeeba is but of little wit, so she will perhaps tell her son Antar; and should she say, I nursed Ibla with your milk, may be his high spirit will mount up, and he will not venture near his bride. Amarah's intention was to stop Antar's marriage that night, that the medicine might have its full effect upon him, ignorant, as he was, that the drug was in his own bowels. Simiah agreed to his proposal, for she much coveted the necklaces. Amarah departed, his heart full of joy. Simiah turned towards the pavilion, and met an immense concourse of people, all huddled one upon another. The candles were burning, and the torches were waving—Ibla came forth in state, looking about right and left, and as some one has described:

"She exhibited the play of her charms in her "features and her form, as her elegant shape moved "about. She looked and shot arrows from her eye-"lashes, and threw amongst us penetrating darts. "The beauties of her face exclaimed to her admirers, "Be not ignorant, and attach yourselves to her "charms. Every charm was united in her that "could captivate the senses, when she either sat still "or moved."

When Ibla had appeared in state among the people, her mother took the sword out of her hand, and wished to dress her a second time; but fire and animation seized Antar; urged by his pride, he darted at Ibla, and snatched her off the throne of state like a sparrow, and entered the pavilion with her, leaving pain and regret in the hearts of all the bystanders: but Shiboob and Jareer remained at the door of the pavilion, protecting their brother from every harm.

Simiah, Shedad's wife, imparted to Zebeeba what Amarah had instructed her to say; and as Zebeeba was very deficient in sense, and not a little careless, she let her son alone till he had entered the tent with his cousin Ibla, when she went to him, and seating herself by his side, congratulated him on his marriage. O my son, said she, thanks be to God that thy trouble has not been thrown away, for Ibla, after having been thy sister, is become thy bride. But, my son, do not tell any one of this. At these words the light became dark in his eyes. What is this you say, my mother? he cried. Know, my son, said his mother, that I frequently suckled Ibla with thy milk. And why did you not inform me of this circumstance before now? asked Antar. Because, replied Zebeeba, I never thought you would obtain her. But now I tell you; so do as you please. And away she went. Antar was bewildered at the vicissitudes of fortune; he did not approach Ibla, but passed the night reflecting on the misfortunes directed against him from all quarters.

As to Amarah, he returned home, and sent for Kehla: when she came, he ordered her to bring him cups and goblets, which she did; and when he had drunk three cups of wine with her, and was caressing her, he fell almost senseless. Amarah was startled, and in despair; Surely, said he to her, you have not made any mistake with the drugs! What's that you say? cried Kehla; it is all your aversion for me that makes you speak thus: you saw Ibla this evening, and have been looking at her charms. Amarah remained doubtful, whether to believe it or not; sometimes talking of the drugs, and sometimes of the wine, till he perceived a lethargy come over his limbs and senses; and he was in a dreadful state of confusion.

As to Antar, he remained, as we said, till day dawned, when Ibla's mother came in, with the women of the Carad family, to congratulate her on her marriage, as was customary. They entered; but seeing her exceedingly distressed, her mother asked, What was the matter? O my mother, said Ibla, my cousin loves me not; and says he has heard something that must part us for ever.

At hearing this, her mother was greatly exasperated. She sent for Antar; What have you done here? cried she. You black! you cuckold! do you wish to make us a scandal among the Arabs? What has happened? What's the matter? my mistress, said Antar. You have taken my daughter by force, said Shereeha, and have kept off all suitors and lovers from her; and now she is yours, you have

cast her from your heart, and don't care about her, I desire you will tell me what this means, for never will I quit you till it is cleared up. I will take away my daughter, if you don't want her; but if you are a nasty greasy pot, I will put you on woman's clothes, and give you a hurdy-gurdy or a dulcimer, you filthy fellow! O my mistress, replied Antar, didst ever see any one approach his sister, or consider her as his wife? Who's your sister? said Shereeha. Ibla, replied Antar; and then he told her what his mother Zebeeba had related to him. Whither and how? cried Shereeha: I was not big with Ibla till you were ten years old, and you were constantly roaming about the wilds and mountains, tending camels and sheep; and she immediately sent for Antar's mother: Zebeeba, said she, hast thou at any time suckled Ibla with Antar's milk? I don't understand you; I know nothing about it, said Zebeeba. My mistress Simiah desired me to say all this to my son Antar. O my mistress, one night I was in a deal of trouble; I lay down, and I was terribly agitated about this sad affair: I was so confused that I said to myself, Which is tallest, I or my son? and when I stood by him, I perceived that I did not come up to his knees; then I thought he was my father, and that I was his daughter. When Ibla's mother and the other women heard this, they all laughed; but as Shereeha wished to know the truth of it, What could you mean by these suggestions? said she to Simiah; thus to disturb the happiness of my daughter and her

cousin! O Shereeha, said Simiah, know then, that Amarah gave me this diamond necklace, and made me swear to instruct Zebeeba thus; but though I was aware no one could possibly prove the fact, I could not reconcile myself to the loss of this necklace merely for a word or so, feeling assured that for this night my son would bear with me. Antar's countenance now brightened with joy, and his bosom expanded with delight. Away, then, said he to the women, you have finished your congratulations. He went to Ibla, and as he looked at her, he thought of Zebeeba's expressions, and all she had said to procrastinate his happiness, and thus he spoke:

"Zebeeba thought Ibla was her daughter; Ze-
"beeba lied, and she too who instructed her. Ze-
"beeba is like the obscurity when it rises; the
"night is in her, and is as if she were fraternised to
"it. But the sweet Ibla is like the morning, and
"her charms are pre-eminent. Who would draw a
"parallel between the owl and the dove? and who
"would find fault with the sun at noon-day? My
"mother came with a horrible story; she came with
"an insidious falsehood in her speech."

When he had recited his verses, he quitted Ibla, scented as he was with musk and ambergris. The shouts arose, and the slave-girls whirled the cymbals in every direction; but the happiest of all were King Cais and his brothers; and as Antar came to him with the Arab chiefs, Cais congratulated him on his nuptials, as did every one else, kissing him

between the eyes. King Cais having invested him with an honorary robe, and also all the Arab chiefs present on the occasion of Antar's marriage, questioned him as to his heart's contentment. O, my lord, replied Antar, I have succeeded in obtaining my cousin only by your noble firmness, and the decision of your character; and thus Antar addressed him:

"I swear by thee that I have passed a time of "happiness, and I enjoyed the most perfect delight "in her society till dawn. As Ibla lay, musk spread "delicious fragrance from her person, and her "breath to me is more delicious than oil of roses. "I kissed her bosom and her cheeks, ornamented "with precious jewels, and the flush of wine. I "grasped in her the branch of the tamarisk, steeped "in clouds of beauty from the distilling rain; she "leant on me with her hand, her elbow, and her "wrist. We were cheek to cheek and neck to neck. "Never did I behold amongst the human race any "thing like Ibla; lovelier and more beautiful than "the sun and moon. When she stirs, her graceful "movements resemble the wave of the branch with "its green leaves. O, I vow no other charms will "I ever love in my life; never, whilst the world "endures, will I ever fail in my fondness for her. "Ibla is indeed a matchless nymph; thin loined, "and delicate waisted. Love for her penetrates my "heart and my entrails: it is as if the tears that "flow down my cheeks should flow in blood. Away, "away, never will I forget her love; no, never till

" I rest in my grave. She is my object and desire " in every desert; never will I abandon her till the " day of judgment."

King Cais and all present were in admiration of his eloquence, saying, God be praised, that has endued thee with intrepidity and skill in arms, and fluency of speech! Thus they continued feasting and enjoying themselves for seven days successively, and after that the Arabs separated for their respective homes, surprised at the marriage, and the quantity of wealth expended at it.

When the Arabs were gone, the Absians remained two days quietly in their tents, but on the third day King Cais gave a splendid feast at the lake of Zat-ul-irsad to the tribe of Abs, in honour of Antar's nuptials; and when they had eaten their dinner, the wine circled among them, and as they were thus occupied, behold a dust like smoke arose. Antar and Mocri-ul-wahsh mounted with the Absian chiefs to meet it, in order to see what it meant, and lo! it discovered a close-vizored knight, followed by ten thousand horsemen clad in armour and steel. This warrior was called Awtaban, son of Semaamaa, and the reason of his coming into the land of Abs was this: As he was on a predatory excursion against the property of the Arabs, he quitted the land of Yemen, his own country, and continued his expedition through the land of Cahtan, and entered the country of the tribes of Adnan, where meeting the Arabs who were separating from Antar's nuptials, he inquired about their movements,

and they told him all about Antar's marriage, and the wealth and cattle he had expended on that occasion. At this description of Antar, he was highly incensed and indignant, for he was also one of the famed giants in those days of ignorance. We must now proceed, said he to his heroes, to plunder the goods of the Absians, and kill their men, and slay Antar, whose name is thus famed and celebrated. I will take his cousin Ibla captive, and make her my concubine; and he hastened on till he came nigh unto the Absians.

When Antar saw the armies and horsemen, he turned towards the tribe of Abs to consult with them on what they should do in this affair. Beholding their countenances turn pale from fear, Cousins, said he, banish these terrors and alarms; comfort yourselves, and rejoice in the defeat of your foes; and he attacked in front of the Absians. Ibla, with the other women, came out to see what was going on; and as Antar beheld Ibla as she stood among the women without the tents, he was afraid she would look upon him with the eye of inferiority, so he rushed upon Awtaban's troops. Hola! O Arabs, he cried, tell me whence ye are, and what has brought ye hither? He had scarcely finished when Awtaban stood before him; Eh! black wretch, coward, poltroon, cried he, what slave of the tribe of Abs and Adnan art thou? Thou son of a base coward, said Antar, I am the vanquisher of heroes; I am he who enjoys with my sword the tribute of all these countries. I am the Chief An-

tar, son of the Chief Shedad. And I am come in quest of thee, said Awtaban in answer: this day I must slay thee, and take captive thy cousin Ibla; and if thou dost not know me, thou son of a poltroon, I am Awtaban, the knight of Yemen, and in my tribute are the lands of Senaa and Aden. He had not finished when Antar shouted at him and attacked. Awtaban met him, and addressed him in these lines:

"O Chief Antar, a hero has come against thee,
" whose power in the girded sword is to be dreaded:
" it cleaves the neck of the horsemen and the foe,
" and lays them low at every stroke. How many
" knights have I slain in the plain of battle, where
" they fall on their cheeks, and struggle with their
" hands! Come on, then; in me is an impetuous
" knight, whose ambition soars above every hero."

May thy mother forfeit thee, and may thy family and tribe be deprived of thee! replied Antar. This day will I make the last of thy days; and he thus answered:

" Thou liest, by the shrine of God! thou most
" ignorant of men, thou son of a coward, thou
" vilest of wretches! Come on to the fight! Soon
" thou wilt meet a lion whose power is a match for
" every antagonist; whose Absian, Antarian vehe-
" mence overthrows the firmest of the foes with his
" mangling thrusts, and hurls down dead the war-
" rior-enemy with his sword, and leaves them slain
" like camels gasping in death, abundant as carrion

" for the wild beasts—food for the birds of the " deserts, and the hawks."

Thus saying, Antar rushed upon Awtaban. Awtaban received him with a heart like a rock; and between them there ensued the battle of swords and spears, that turned infants grey, and sickened the eyes. They continued in this state, plying the sword-blow and the spear-thrust, till all the warriors shuddered at their exploits. Antar looked at Awtaban, and saw he was a mailed lion, and a terrific warrior. They continued to fight, to give and take, to sport, to exert themselves, to advance and retire, till Antar perceiving that Awtaban was exhausted and tired, hemmed him in, and clung to him; then closing every means of escape, he grasped his dreadful Dhami, irresistible and never-failing, and smote Awtaban on the head, covered as he was with his shield, but Antar's sword cut it in two, and cleft his helmet, and the chains, and the wadding, and still continued its sway till it issued through his thighs to the back of his horse, and Awtaban fell, he and his horse, cut in four; and at the effects of his blow he shouted out, O by Abs! O by Adnan! I will ever be the lover of Ibla. All the Absians gave an universal shout, May thy hand be never palsied! may no foe ever triumph over thee! may no one ever harm thee! thou knight of the age; thou champion of the tribe of Abs and Adnan!

As to Awtaban's troops, when they saw that Antar had felled their chief, they attacked with all

their ten thousand like one man, crying out, O thou black! thou wretch! thou coward! thou poltroon! thou hast slain a knight whose equal the age will never produce. Antar received them on the chest of his horse Abjer, whilst the Absians also assaulted to assist him; men met men, and heroes heroes; blood flowed and streamed; limbs were hewn off; the Absians exerted all their powers in the presence of their wives and families, and destroyed the foe with their force and vigour. As to Antar, he exposed himself to death and destruction, for he knew Ibla was looking at him. Mocri-ul-wahsh performed in the presence of Antar deeds to be recorded, and in less than two hours Awtaban's troops fled; but the Absians and Antar pursued them closely, till having driven them out of the country, they returned to their scattered horses and dispersed armies; and having collected their property, they went home, Antar at their head, as if drowned in a sea of blood; and thus he spoke:

"My heart is at rest; it is recovered from its in-
"toxication. Sleep has calmed my eyelids, and
"relieved them. Fortune has aided me, and my
"prosperity cleaves the veil of night, and the seven
"orders of heaven. I am the slave that encounters
"death on the day of terrors, and fears not destruc-
"tion. I have slain Awtaban, and he was a knight
"stout armed and bitter palated; I hurled him to
"the ground, laid low by my sword, his feet and
"legs wallowing in blood. I have made the horse-
"men drink of the cup of death mixed with tortures,

" at my scimitar's edge. I am the man from whom
" they experience on the day of fears insufferable
" justice: a youth that fells the horsemen on the
" day of battle, and dreads not the thin edge of the
" sabre. Ah! O Ibla, if thou hadst beheld my
" deeds, and my thrusts with the straight spear,
" thy love for me would increase, and thou wouldst
" truly applaud my acts as long as people walk or
" move on the earth. My glory is on high, in the
" towers of the Pleiades, and my ambition rends the
" seven ranges of heaven."

When Antar had finished, the heroes and warriors were astonished at his eloquence; they retired home, and dividing the horses and the spoil amongst the horsemen, they renewed their feasts, and entertainments, and sports, at the lake of Zat ul irsad and the purling streams, the slave-women beating the cymbals, and the men flourishing their swords.

THE END.

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